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WHAT SHOULD I BELIEVE?

By GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD

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AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE, GROUNDS AND VALUE OF THE FAITHS OF SCIENCE, SOCIETY MORALS AND RELIGION

BY

GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD, LL.D.

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FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK
LONDON, BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS
1915

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15-9948

PREFACE

THERE are no questions bearing on the conduct of life which are more frequently asked, or with greater perplexity, than the one that has been chosen for the title of this little volume. All over the world millions of inquiring minds, some of them sincerely anxious to know the truth, are daily propounding this question to the newspaper, not only to its columns of alleged news, but chiefly to its advertisements and its editorials. The man of business, however little speculative, does not expect positively to *know* in what direction the market will move along the line which constitutes his principal interest; but he seeks for as persuasive grounds as it is possible to attain, by which to regulate his *beliefs*. In a critical case, the physician watches the symptoms of his patient, not so wisely with the hope that he may make his predictions of recovery or of speedy death as certain as those of the return of daylight or of darkness at the

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hour announced by the almanac, as that he may guide his behavior in meeting those symptoms according to the faiths rendered most reasonable by his medical science. And the question asked with the most insistent anxiety by the relative or friend of the patient concerns the amount of "trust" which can be properly given to the word and the skill of that same physician. In all these relations, the question, What shall I most reasonably believe? is the one kept prominently before the mind.

We do not need to be told how prominent are the perplexities of doubt and trust in all courts of law. Here it is credibility of belief rather than certainty of knowledge which invariably plays the leading part. This is not simply or chiefly because there are so many lawyers and witnesses who do not hesitate over a trifle of deceit or a modicum of deliberate lying; or even because our very latest and most purified means of administering justice have not freed us of judges capable of being influenced by the many ways of indirect as well as of open bribery. It is the rather because the conduct of the public justice is essentially and always concerned with, and dependent upon, the beliefs and not the knowledges of

those who take part in it. It is not without deep significance, then, that the witness swears to testify to the truth according to the "best of his *belief*" as well as of his knowledge. Honest and thorough as the best of witnesses may be in his intention, it is much more of credible impression than of certainty which he puts forth in answer to his oath to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

We might be tempted to think from the talk of some of its advocates (the so-called "scientists") that science is, since it has more clearly recognized the nature of proof and has taken the modern experimental turn, almost or quite independent of the influence of general or more particular and individual, not to say eccentric and highly peculiar, beliefs; that, in fact, it has at last succeeded in making the whole compacted body of its conclusions so transparent that the light of the truth of reality now shines right through it, revealing its bony structure, systems of circulation, of digestion and of propagation, in every detail of their anatomy and of their functions. But even the novice who reads its literature or attends — listening thoughtfully — any of the stated meetings of its various learned societies, knows

that the case is not so. And no confidential converse with any of the most judicious and really distinguished of its representatives is possible which does not make clear the fact that they at least do not claim that it is so. They only claim to be trying to reduce a great and confused mass of conflicting opinions and beliefs to terms of scientifically verifiable knowledge.

When we come to examine matters of political and social theory and practice, we need not be long in discovering that the strongest forces controlling here are the beliefs rather than the science of mankind. Debates in representative bodies the world over are not statements of truths verily known and accompanied by their proofs; they are more largely muddles of unanalyzed beliefs and crude unverified opinions. Of the causes of these opinions those who hold them can give little account; and the reasons for them have never been subjected to any thorough examination or prepared for legitimate defence. In the less deliberate and guarded forms of the social maxims and social customs, the beliefs rather than the knowledges of the human beings who compose the social factors have much the larger sway.

If now we could investigate in detail, one by one, the origin, nature, and practical uses of human beliefs, could enumerate, classify, and explain them, we could then settle once for all their real grounds and the reasonableness of their influence. He who should accomplish this task would have in his hand the key to human conduct and human character. He might even give scientific precision to his predictions as to the coming developments of humanity and the future course of human history. But the individuality, the infinite diversity, of personality, renders the dream of such an enterprise as futile as it is fantastic. We may make one rough and popular distinction, however, which, in spite of its roughness and lack of scientific precision, may be used, at least in the way of warning, to some good purpose of practical value. In the case of the millions of readers of the daily paper, to whom reference was earlier made, we should find a considerable proportion ready to classify themselves at the extreme ends of a line intended to serve as a sort of measure of faith and credulity. Owing to the enforced inaccuracy or the duplicity and faithlessness of those who write for every form of the public press, there is a rather

numerous class of readers who are fond of saying: "But, then, you know, I never believe anything which I see in the newspapers" (or in the magazine, or book); — or what I hear in the way of gossip, or perhaps, what the parson puts into his sermon, or what the churches have put into their so largely divergent if not contradictory creeds. But another not less numerous class of readers and hearers will be esteemed — not altogether unjustly — by their contemporaries to be either a bit, or altogether, too credulous. When asked, How do you know that? or, Why do you believe that? they think it quite sufficient justification to respond: "Why, I read it in such or such a newspaper or book;" or "So I was told by such or such a person." The multitude of mankind might then be divided into the too credulous and the too incredulous.

Now plainly, neither of these two extreme positions is tenable, whether it is assumed on grounds of intrinsic reasonableness or because of an experience of its practical value. No man can live successfully, or even live at all, without the possession and the use of an enormous number of beliefs that can only slowly, or not at all, be converted into verifiable knowl-

edge-judgments. Indeed, when any one makes unqualified denial of faith in what he reads or hears from others, he is simply not telling the truth. And if he intend to extend this sceptical denial to all manner of beliefs, he is most abundantly showing that he has no adequate conception of human nature, of the necessary constitution of human society, or of what manner of a being he himself is. But surely I do not need to argue that he who believes everything he reads in the daily press or hears from the gossips, or even everything which the parson says from the pulpit, is in no less sad case. For if the universal sceptic in the realm of belief could not act at all, the indiscriminately credulous man would never be able to decide in what particular direction to act. For both extremes, a successful and happy life would be alike impossible.

From these prefatory remarks we may derive at once the practical conclusions: first, that we all must believe something, must, indeed, have and cherish and trust a goodly host of beliefs; but, second, that we must all make selection of certain beliefs rather than others. We *must* believe many things that we cannot as yet know; but we *must not* believe everything, we

must be discriminating in our beliefs. It is these two indubitable facts which give interest and value to the question: What should I believe? It is the same facts which emphasize the extreme difficulty of answering the same question. And when we consider the enormous influence and incomparable value of some of the greater human beliefs — notably those which prevail in the spheres of morality and religion, — it begins to look as though no question could be more important than this, however perplexing. From these facts, too, the reader may derive at the very beginning, if he kindly will, a considerable sum both of interest and of indulgence in the work of the author. Still more than in the answer to the question, What ought I to do? is it impossible, in answering the question, What should I believe? for one human being to lay down precise rules for any other. The laws, the customs, and the developed conscience of the public and of the individual, have in many lines pretty strictly marked out the rules of conduct for the individual. From the very nature of the case, all these influences could never do the same thing for the limits of belief. And of late, whether for good or for evil, the attempt to do this has either greatly weakened

or wholly ceased to exist. But there are guide-boards set up here and there, if there are few lines of enclosure definitely drawn. We shall try to discover what some of these guide-boards are.

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"If, then, among the many opinions about the gods and the generation of the Universe, we are not able to give notions that are exact and consistent with one another, do not wonder at that."

— PLATO.

WHAT SHOULD I BELIEVE?

CHAPTER I

GUESSING, "TROWING," AND BELIEVING

IN the very statement of the question, "What should I believe?" (or phrase it otherwise, as we will) certain relations are implied to the two other questions and their answers, which have been considered in the preceding volumes of this series.[1] For surely, without knowing *something* I cannot believe anything; and the briefest and most superficial analysis of the activity called knowing shows how every such activity involves elements of belief. In a less patent but even more interesting way there is a suggestion of connection between believing and the conduct we call moral. At least, thoughtful men are always raising the inquiry, which the social environment of every individual enforces: "Is it ever my duty to believe some

[1] "What Can I Know?" and "What Ought I to Do?" (Longmans, Green & Co.)

things and not to believe other things?" "Is the exercise of choice among contesting or conflicting beliefs a matter of moral obligation; and if so, on what grounds should the choice be determined?" Especially insistent are these practical inquiries in matters of moral beliefs and religious faith.

In order to breathe properly, or to acquire and habitually practise the most approved methods of "deep breathing," it is not absolutely indispensable that one should become an expert in the physiology of respiration. Even less is it necessary, in order to enjoy a fair measure of such health as comes from a properly regulated diet, that one should master all the mysteries of digestion and nutrition. For, indeed, these mysteries are still hidden from the wisest and most prudent; and physiological chemistry is as yet a new and rapidly developing branch of biological science. It is fortunate for our mental and spiritual welfare, that, in order to select and cherish a considerable outfit of helpful and reasonable faiths, it is not absolutely essential to make a satisfactory psychological analysis of the nature and divergent values of the different forms and degrees of belief. For the problem offered by the bare

question, What is it to believe? is very complicated and in spots excessively obscure.

It does not follow from this, however, that there is no theoretical satisfaction or practical benefit to be expected from essaying some sort of a tentative and partial answer to the question we have just pronounced so difficult and, in fact, to no small extent unanswerable. Even if we accepted without controversy at its fullest alleged value the likeness between physical and mental, or moral and spiritual health, so narrow a conclusion would not hold. For the most extreme pragmatist in matters of sanitation and bodily comfort, some knowledge of the physiology of respiration and of physiological chemistry has a certain rational as well as practical value, — if, indeed, we have any right to separate between the two kinds of value. But in respect of our beliefs, there are limitations to the force of analogies between the health and welfare of the body and the requisites and sanity of the development of the spirit that is in man. To this spirit, even in its more primary satisfactions, as well as concerning the healthfulness of its entire development, there is something disturbing, if not positively hateful, about believing what is not true, even to be

comforted thereby. To pin one's faith to a lie is to be condemned already. How to guard our beliefs, as well as the conditions of human frailty and the limitations of human experience permit, is therefore a problem of both theoretical difficulty and practical importance that is transcended by no other. But it should be attempted with modesty and resignation.

On approaching the question, What is it to believe? the relations of both likeness and difference between knowledge and belief are the most immediately impressive. As we have elsewhere said ("What Can I Know?" p. 98 f.): "The real differences between our beliefs and our knowledge are chiefly these two: Our beliefs are more largely based upon experiences of emotion and sentiment in a predominating way; and the most intense and tenacious of them are attached to matters that have some kind of ideal value." But these differences, even if we admit that they stand in the front rank, show themselves in experience more frequently as matters of degree rather than of kind; and at best, they are only two differences selected out of a much larger number, rather for their obviousness than for their intrinsic importance. It decidedly is not true, as Sir

William Hamilton has affirmed with his quite too customary disposition to make his definitions more precise than accords with the delicate and indefinitely varied shadings of the facts of life: "Knowledge and Belief differ not only in degree but in kind." "Knowledge is a certainty founded upon insight; belief is certainty founded upon feeling. The one is perspicuous and objective, the other obscure and subjective." Nor do we need in this connection to go over again our objections to the rigidness of Kant's distinction, which seemed to base the justification for an assurance to so-called "knowledge," such as so-called "faith" could never attain, in some kind of a finished process of transition from "subjective certainty" to "objective certainty."

Professor Maher is quite justified in saying (Psychology," p. 330), from the point of view of every-day experience, "What is *knowledge* to one man may therefore be *belief* to another." Surely: and what is at one time belief to one man may come to be knowledge to the same man at another time; and what to some other man was knowledge at the time at which it was belief to the first man may come to be belief — even very faint belief — to this other man at

the same time that it is placed on the firmer ground of knowledge by the same first man. The professor's expository lecture may carry the pupil over from vague and doubtful belief to the assurance of scientific (*sic*) knowledge; but the listening pupil's pungent question may throw the knowing professor back upon the shadowy ground of a by no means assured belief. In such a case, the one teaches the other *why* he should now assent; the other suggests to the one *why* he should examine anew the grounds of his former assent.

"Belief," says a recent discussion of this difficult subject, "has been variously assigned to the cognitional, emotional, and volitional faculties; and its sphere has been made to comprehend all kinds of assurance, from trust in human or divine testimony to convictions of the validity of primary truths." (Maher, p. 326.) This sentence states, and its analysis reveals, the distinguishing faults of the hitherto reigning systems of psychology. One fault consists in the assumption that any attitude of the human mind toward any object of sense or any judgment arising in consciousness, whether with a perfect seeming spontaneity or as the result of prolonged research or severe reflective

thinking, can properly "be assigned" to any one of these so-called "faculties" to the complete or even very partial seclusion of the other. Scientific judgments are as truly complex attitudes of mind involving all these so-called *faculties* (if we are to speak of the different factors, phases, or "moments" of these attitudes in this way) as are religious beliefs, or the rights and obligations we acknowledge in matters of conduct from the ethical point of view. The other fault is more characteristic of a psychology that, in trying to vindicate its claim to be modern, has shut its eyes to many of the most profound and persistent and incomparably valuable sides of human experience; or if it consents to see them at all, thinks properly to compass and explain them by purely mechanical theories or the petty methods of the *questionnaire* or the psychological laboratory.

In approaching the problem of the nature of belief we must admit at once its extreme complexity, and the delicate and shifting aspect of the picture, even when drawn in outline, of this attitude of mind as compared or contrasted with those which most nearly resemble it, or even quite definitely involve it, but which we generally prefer to call by other names. Belief

is not knowledge, is not mere sentiment, is not uncertain opinion, is not pure thought. But it is allied with all these mental states.

Let us then admit the variety and shifting character of the various factors which enter into the relation toward its object, of the believing mind. For, in truth, to adopt the distinction of Cardinal Newman in his very subtle and illumining book, "The Grammar of Assent," there is in real life no such thing as "simple assent." There is only indefinitely "complex assent." All mental yielding to the facts of perception, or to the suggestions of so-called instinct, or to the word of the trusted teacher or beloved friend, as well as to all claims of morality and to the *credos* of religion, if it be a genuine and full-fledged attitude of belief, is a complex affair.

It is possible, however, to discriminate some of the more important, if less obvious, of the factors which enter into every attitude of belief, or, if the term be received for the time as instructive, of "complex consent." And in entering upon this venture we will take our point of departure from the other end of the line, so to say. If the attitude of mind which we are wont to call knowledge seems to have in

its favor more of subjective assurance, and to justify this, more of objective evidence, the very opposite is true of that curious and interesting mental activity which we call guessing. It is not especially, and certainly not exclusively, in the form of the "guessing" of the Yankee or the "reckoning" of the Southerner, that this remoteness from the assumption of knowledge is most clearly realized. For the mental attitudes which it is designed to express by these characteristic colloquialisms usually involve all the pretence, if not the reality, of the more completed forms of mental assurance as based on unassailable grounds. In the king's English, however, genuine guessing is in one respect, at least, most unlike the higher kinds of cognition and most like the lower kinds of belief. This respect has to do with ignorance of the grounds and almost, if not complete disregard of the reasons, on which the mental attitude is itself dependent. In this use of the word, *guessing* is peculiarly the gambler's forte. It is not without a profound and suggestive meaning that we employ the quite appropriate phrase of "*hazarding* a guess." Why he selects the particular card, or the number at roulette, as sure to win, the guesser is at the time of its

selection quite unable to tell. By a system of mysterious calculations, which are apt to carry with them no "objective sufficiency" (to avail ourselves again of the somewhat misleading phrase of Kant), the gambler may have proved to his own satisfaction that his guess is well founded; but in doing this he has quite changed his mental attitude. He has converted an uncertain and inexplicable hazard into a specious form of assured knowledge.

Now it is also characteristic of every form of belief that, so long as it remains mere belief, or "simple assent," it is quite ignorant of its own causes and at least relatively regardless of its reasons or proofs. Perhaps we shall not be far from the truth if we say, though in a way subject to further correction or amendment, that this is the distinguishing thing about all kinds of belief, so long as they remain chiefly *belief*, and have not made considerable advances toward the conditions demanded by knowledge. For knowledge and belief, or faith, require only a more or less degree of shifting in the complex characteristics which they share in common, in order that the one may quickly transform itself or slowly fade away into the other. Negatively stated, then, we know little

or nothing about the origins of many of our beliefs; and this is as true of the most instant and truly rational among them as it is of the most trivial and superstitious or unscientific. Positively stated, the first thing that we do know about them is that they already exist; they are there.

We may illustrate this — although the illustration is confessedly liable to misinterpretation — by the beliefs that fuse with the most ordinary acts of knowledge by perception. I *know* that the thing over there is a tree, a man, or something quite different from either. I see that it is so; and for the proof that it is really so, I ask you to confirm my sight by voluntary use of your own faculties of vision. I point and say, "Look, and if you doubt my word, solve your doubt by an act of knowledge on your own part." Or I say, "There will be an eclipse of the moon to-night;" and if I am asked for something to give "objective sufficiency" to my "subjective assurance," I respond, "I saw it in the morning paper," or, "My friend, the astronomer, told me so." But why do I *believe*, in either case, that the succession of my sensations and ideas has its correlate in reality; or that my processes of

inference bind the order of the world in some sort to conform to them? In answer to these questions, psychology can make shift (if it is the right sort of psychology) to offer some attempt at analysis of the forms of experience in which this belief in the "extra-mental" realities grows up and gets itself distributed among my Self, other selves, and things that are not selves; but the belief itself, with its clinging and irresistible conviction, whip it around the post as we will, depends forever on its own internal and invincible evidence. The negative criticism of Kant, and all the subtilties of old-fashioned "solipsism" or new-fashioned "absolute empiricism," are totally without effect in undermining or weakening this "natural" belief.

Here, then, — to state the same truth in somewhat different form — is the fundamental and most important but by no means sole distinction between that attitude, or aspect of any attitude, toward an object or a proposition, which we call belief, and that other attitude which we call knowledge. The former has reference to the unexplained and largely or wholly inexplicable assent of the mind; the latter to the more or less complete, but always

partial, awareness of the grounds of the assent. These grounds may be either causes, as in knowledge of facts by perception, or reasons, as in knowledge gained by the testimony of others or by the use of our powers of observation and inference.

We do not, however, play the gambler's game of hazarding a guess, when we consent to these instinctive beliefs. Although we may fitly distinguish, as does Professor Maher, ("Psychology," p. 349) between "the spontaneous faith embodied in the primitive perceptive act and the rational conviction evoked in the developed consciousness by intellectual perception," the distinction does not necessarily involve any essential change in the intrinsic nature of faith or belief. Instinctive belief is not opposed to rational conviction. Does not, the rather, such belief lie at the base of all rational conviction? Belief is always there, and is not to be called blind or irrational simply because it does not announce to itself in consciousness either the causes or the reasons for its presence. As a causative psychical factor it enters essentially into every intellectual process. It is the work of the discriminating faculty, or intellect, the reflective activity of the

mind, which is to discover and expand the *justification* of belief, and thus convert otherwise blind belief into rational conviction. This work is essential to man, if he is successfully to vindicate his claim to be something more and higher than the animal moved by instincts, the nature of which as causes he does not recognize, and the reasonableness of which as contributing to his own higher intellectual and spiritual development he has never sought to inquire into or even dimly discerned. Indeed, this lifting of beliefs into the heights of rational convictions, this exaltation of faith as simple assent toward, if never quite into, the assurance of knowledge, is both the right and the obligation of the spirit that is in man.

To the distinction between causes and reasons, and to the claims, the obligations, and the usefulness of rational conviction, in science and in society, but above all in morals and in religion, we shall return at another time. We now call attention only to the fact that this spontaneous and unintelligible characteristic of belief does not necessarily render it any less trustworthy, whether for theoretical purposes even to the extent of helping to explain the physical Universe, or for the individual's

conduct of his own life. When we say that we *believe* in the fundamental truths of science, in the testimony of the senses, or in the axiomatic principles of mathematics or logic, we are simply saying that the convictions which attach to these propositions are of the first degree of certitude as knowledge. In morals and religion, too, the same thing may be true. In some sort, all this knowledge walks by faith rather than by sight, as indeed the wisest of men have done in the conduct of their daily life. But this conviction does not deaden, and it should only stimulate, the desire and the effort to know the reason, — Why?

The old-fashioned and now obsolete word "Trowing" is the one which has been used to translate that attitude of mind which Kant placed at the beginning of his celebrated chapter, entitled "Of Trowing, Knowing, and Believing." He supposed this arrangement to represent the three degrees of conviction which maintain themselves with regard to our judgments "holding anything to be true." Trowing is "to hold a judgment true with the consciousness that our judgment rests on grounds which are insufficient to produce a firm conviction." More tersely said, trowing is to hold consciously

a probable judgment. The modern phrase is either "I am of the opinion" that it is so or so; or more commonly in the popular language, "I think" that it is so or so. This use of words shows a more or less clear recognition of the reasons, or grounds of inference, on which a tentative "knowledge-judgment" might in this case properly be placed before one's own mind or before the mind of another for further consideration. The evidence is not as yet sufficient to produce firm conviction of either the speaker or the hearer. In such cases, if debate arises, it is both polite and wise to say something like this: "I am inclined to this opinion, for the evidence, so far as it is at present ascertainable by me, seems to point to this conclusion. But what do you think? This is the evidence I have to present. Can you add to it, or confute it?" Thus the way is open for discussion.

Now it is true that men sometimes, and indeed many men habitually, treat their most important and sacred beliefs in largely similar way. But this is, probably, if not universally, because they are *trowing* or merely guessing, and not really believing. If it is a matter of genuine and unfeigned belief (and almost

equally so if it is a matter of genuine and serious doubt) the talk takes on a different tone. Here we may be reminded of Tennyson's saying:

> "There lies more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds."

Of its beliefs, and almost equally of its doubts, especially in matters of morals and religion, the native and unreflective mind is apt to appeal to feeling or some kind of unanalyzed and perhaps indescribable sentiment. One will frankly confess: I cannot tell why I hold this belief, or how it came to me. Or perhaps one may plead that so one's parents and teachers believed before one; that this was what everybody believed when one was young, — the belief in which one was brought up, so to say; that it is the belief prescribed by the moral sentiment of one's social environment or by the creed of the religious communion of which one is a member. To believe in this way affords, therefore, a pleasant satisfaction; doubts as to intellectual justification of such a belief are disturbing or positively disagreeable. Doubts, when they become negative beliefs, do not differ in this respect. It is not strange, then, but on the contrary rather appropriate than

otherwise, to hear this mental attitude toward some object, or proposition, or principle, declared with an air of triumphing over objections: "These are my sentiments"; or, "This is what I cannot help feeling to be true."

It is this characteristic of many human beliefs, and not least the most defensible from the theoretical point of view and the most practically useful, which justifies Professor Stout in saying: "*Belief* is the word specially selected for affirmation or denial which is predominantly referable to practical or sentimental motives." ("Analytical Psychology," vol. I, p. 97.) Now, "practical and sentimental motives" are by no means to be disregarded in estimating not only the affectional satisfaction and practical benefit of the person who cherishes them, but also the objective and universal validity and value of the truths to which the beliefs attach themselves. To show how this is true involves a distinction between the science of the factual causes of our mental states and the logic and metaphysics which detect in them the reasons for and against our intellectual construction of the real World from which these causes proceed and so operate upon us as motives for all our various sentiments and

practical activities. Without discussing at present this distinction between causes and reasons we may appropriately have our attention called to the general fact that the sentiments and beliefs which are *caused* by our own experience, or by that of our ancestors, and in certain cases of the entire human race, are bound to have an influence upon our ideas of the truth and our ideals of the right, which goes far beyond any *reasons* that we may be able to assign in justification of this influence. It is in these sentimental and practical attitudes toward life and reality, in the beliefs that spring from the obscure and hitherto hidden roots of a vast and deep soil of unanalyzed human experience, that many of the choicest fruits of the race's development consist. Many beliefs are justified by *causes* which the minds who entertain the beliefs are quite unable to convert into *reasons* for holding them.

We have heard much of late concerning instinct and so-called intuition, to the detriment and despite of intellect and of its rationalizing processes. And a bad much of this has been due both to separating things that are intimately dependent and interrelated, and to failing to discriminate where the differences

are somewhat important, if not essential. For, while intellect and intuition cannot be separated, but are dependent each upon the other, and feeling enters into both, intuition, in its blinder forms of instinct and belief, must not be trusted as though it could escape all responsibility for an answer at the court of understanding.

It is most suggestive in this connection to notice what Aristotle says in his treatment of the so-called "Intellectual Virtues." They are the output of the "intuitive reason." For intuition is the beginning and intuition is the end; and the work of intellect in eliciting and proving the truths of science and of the practical life lies in between. At the beginning of all demonstration, that of the most exact of the sciences included, stands "intuitive reason," which "deals with ultimate truths in both senses of the word; for both primary principles and ultimate facts are apprehended by intuitive reason and not by demonstration." But "these powers are believed to accompany certain periods of life, and a certain age is said to bring reason and judgment, implying that they come by nature." Then almost with a surprising naïveté the great thinker goes on to say: "And on this account we ought to pay

the same respect to the undemonstrated assertions and opinions of men of age and experience and prudence as to their demonstrations. For experience has given them a faculty of vision which enables them to see correctly." This "faculty of vision" which is born of experience is, in many of its essential aspects, and especially on the side of sentiment, feeling, and practical prudence, very closely allied to some of our choicest beliefs. From this point of view the example cited by Cardinal Newman (and there are innumerable others of similar character and significance) of the value of special cases of "simple assent" to the articles of Christian faith, is by no means void of argumentative force. Of Mother Margaret M. Hallahan, the Cardinal says: "Her firm faith was of so vivid a character, that it was almost like an intuitive vision of the entire prospect of revealed truth."

The part which imagination plays in all belief has been altogether too much neglected by all those who have attempted to make its analysis complete. Image-making and ideation are an essential part of every act of knowledge, as indeed of every form and product of the activity of mental life. But in proper

belief, this constructive activity is normally of a peculiar, and in certain instances not a few, of a really startling character. In all knowing by the senses, it is not the senses alone, or in co-operation, which are responsible for the object as it is actually seen, heard, felt or handled. To construct the object there must be recognition as a form of mental activity; but there cannot be recognition without participation of the image-making faculty. Even more obvious is it that there can be no memory of any object of sense without imagination. But the object in the existence of which we believe is seldom or never a mere reproduction of anything of which we have had experience in a purely sensuous way. This is as true of the beliefs of science and social intercourse as it is of those of morals and religion. The chemist may say that he *knows* the chemical composition of a certain substance; for he and others have often analyzed it and found it to be so. The physicist may claim *knowledge* of the various formulas which express in terms of quantity the relations of the different kinds of things with whose properties and behavior he has become familiar in terms of sense. But the entities with which imagination peoples the

unseen world that explains the phenomena exposed to sense are, the rather, subjects for belief. Of all this class of beliefs the Duke of Argyll remarks ("Philosophy of Belief," p. 359): "This list," — referring to the sons and daughters of faith as celebrated in the Eleventh Chapter to the Epistle to the Hebrews,—"this list begins by including as a conception in the nature of faith, one idea or conviction which belongs essentially to the sphere of science or philosophy — the conviction, namely, that the visible creation has been made out of things that are invisible." And in the same connection he affirms: "It is quite as true in the sphere of the physical sciences as it is true in the sphere of religion and philosophy, that the things which are seen are temporal, and that it is only the things which are not seen that are eternal." But the nature and the very existence of the things unseen and eternal remains forever chiefly a matter for belief rather than for knowledge. And to construct the most simple picture, not to say the most elaborate conception, of *such* things requires the outstretched wing of the strong and ambitious bird of imagination. I *know* that I see the sun, and that in its light this thing seems to me red, the other green, and

still another blue. I may further *know* that by certain mechanical devices I can analyze the complex ray of white light and get these and other colors arranged in a certain order along the spectrum. But I can only *believe* in the adorable and divinely great and judicious light-bearing Ether, the god who is ever creating and reconstructing this earth as my senses make its actual changes *known* to me. For this belief I must borrow the wings of the bird of imagination; otherwise I cannot get behind the light that tints the flowers, or above the dust which is too apt to soil the beauty of these flowers for me. The object of belief invariably requires creative, and not merely reproductive, imagination.

No wonder, then, that imagination, even in the lighter form of "True Romance," has been called

> "The spur of trust, the curb of lust,
> The handmaid of the gods."

It is chiefly in the faiths of morality and religion that the most exalted uses of the imagination are demanded for the construction of the objects believed in, as well as the propositions touching those objects, their relations to each other, and our relations to them. For the

beliefs, which are at once most precious and most difficult, concern the ideals of morality and religion. When these are weak and low, the whole of life lacks strength and dignity. And alas! for the man who must sing in the words of Schiller's ode "To the Ideal,"

> "Gone the divine and sweet believing
> In dreams which Heaven itself unfurled."

But happy is the man who in thought and life can respond to the exhortation:

> "And so, noble soul, forget not the law,
> And to the true faith be leal;
> What ear never heard and eye never saw,
> The Beautiful, the True, — they are real."

This dependence of the *reality* of our beliefs on the work of the imagination in constructing some attractive picture of the object or truth to which the belief attaches itself, is, of course, especially obvious in the interests of our more "appealing" experiences. Our profounder feelings, or our more important practical needs, seem to demand the faith in something which is least provided for by the observations of the senses, or by those inferences from these observations which fall strictly within the limits of the sphere we are entitled to call "knowledge" in the stricter meaning of the word. Imagina-

tion responds to this call; and lo! the demand is satisfied. Thus the assurance of faith, its "ontological consciousness," comes out of the unexplored depths of feeling. It comes, however, to await the criticism of man's reflective powers for its purification and final acceptance or rejection. To the savage, the invisible spirits in which he believes, because he must explain the sensuously visible by the imagined invisible, are as necessary as are the invisible atoms, or radio-active molecules to the modern chemist or physicist. Both classes of beliefs grow out of the spontaneous necessities of human "ontological consciousness." The work of the intellect must decide which is the more reasonable of the two.

At this point, then, we may return again to a brief notice of the dependent relations of knowledge and belief. We have seen that, while belief is like guessing in its customary lack of assurance based on grounds of conscious inference; that it often, if not naturally and habitually, arises in the mind, we know not how and cannot discover whence; it is in other respects quite unlike this "gambler's attitude" toward the issue at stake. In fact, as long as a man merely guesses, he does not really believe

at all. Even the mad conviction as to the lucky combination of numbers or cards which is to bring the guess to an issue in fact, is quite lacking in some of the more important characteristics possessed by the assurance of faith. So also is "trowing," or holding an opinion with doubt on account of the as yet inconclusive nature of the grounds on which it is held at all, like belief, or faith, in some particulars; but unlike it in even more important other particulars. It is sentiments or practical needs in which our beliefs, more than our knowledge-judgments, chiefly have their origin. But in the case of the greater beliefs, whether of the scientific and social or of the moral and religious order, these sentiments and needs are profound, persistent and universal. Dubitation about them is, therefore, a much more serious affair and involves much more of superior practical importance. About them, we do not wish simply to "trow"; to them we wish either to pin our faith or to have done with the irritating pricking of everlasting doubt. We *wish* this; how shall we attain our wish, or even make good and notable advances toward its attainment? We must bring reason to bear upon these faiths for their purification or their

support. We must recognize their possible kinship to knowledge. But we must not forget that, since the best of them are not the offspring of sense, brought to the birth by pure intellect (as though there were any such activity as *pure* intellect), our primary aim cannot reasonably be to prove them as the demonstrative or strictly inductive sciences need proof, but to "purify and support" them.

We have already quoted the words of Aristotle when he classes a deference which amounts to an inclination to believe in, if it does not amount to a confirmed faith in, the undemonstrated opinions of experienced, wise and prudent souls, as one of the chiefest and most practically useful of the "intellectual virtues." Such belief, he holds, reposes in a kind of intuitive vision of the truth. It is thus brought very close to knowledge with respect to its claim for acceptance on grounds of its reasonableness.

The present tendency to minimize and discredit the authority of reason in respect to the greater faiths, and to the conduct of life in accordance with them, seems to us so dangerous in its practical outcome as to demand a very distinct disavowal by every one interested in conserving the most valuable of our social,

moral, and religious convictions and opinions, whether formulated or not. We shall return to the attack upon this tendency again and yet again. Just now, and as connected with a partial analysis of the essential nature of belief, we may content ourselves with saying that the declaration of Mr. Balfour ("Foundations of Belief," 8th ed., p. 237): "Nor is the comparative pettiness of the rôle thus played by reasoning in human affairs a matter for regret," — is as unwarranted by this analysis as it is untrue to the facts of history. The office of reflective thinking always has been, and must always continue to be, that of revealing the truth or the falsity of man's "cryptic beliefs." That certain beliefs carry with them a certain large measure of proof to the individuals who have them, and who rest satisfied in the evidence of a subjective and internal character that is an essential part of the beliefs themselves, is undoubtedly true. But this fact does not remove or shield these, or other beliefs, from perpetual inquiry as to their causes, their reasonableness, and their available practical usefulness, both for those who so tenaciously hold them and for the race at large. Even if the essence of belief

is to furnish a kind of convincing internal evidence, that evidence itself needs constant revision and new interpretation. Especially is it necessary in all cases to discover just where the assurance of belief has located itself; precisely what it is of which the belief makes sure. For many and sad and mischievous are the mistakes of judgment and of conduct which hover around this point of fixation in the protested belief. For example: I see a figure in the dimly lighted air of the room where the spiritualistic seance is being held. I have the assurance of knowledge that this is so; and as well, perhaps, that this figure resembles in a remarkable way that of my deceased friend. But is this sufficient to assure the belief that it really *is* the materialization of the spirit of my deceased friend? Investigations conducted under the control of intellectual processes must have something important to say in answer to this latter question. I see the ribbons enter into the empty bag and the live rabbits hatched in the emptiness appear at once with the ribbons around their necks. I know I seem to see; I believe the bag is really empty and that the rabbits come out of that empty bag. But of what is it in this complex attitude toward

the facts, of which I wish to claim that I am really sure with the assurance of knowledge?

In general, belief enters into the assurance of the knowledge which comes through the most ordinary operations of the senses. But as to the validity and the point of repose which is essential to the belief, discriminating judgment and the critical activity of the intellect must invariably be employed.

The great, the truly pathetic fact in the history of man's spiritual development, is his ceaseless struggle for harmony between his growing knowledge of things and his profoundest, most persistent, and practically valuable beliefs. Nothing but mischief comes from the effort to ignore or degrade either intellect or sentiment and practical considerations in the conduct of this struggle. The beliefs must be made increasingly reasonable. Reason must increasingly be chastened and spiritualized and rendered serviceable to the ideals and experiences which have supreme value. Increasing harmony of the complex attitude of man toward the world of things, toward his own complex nature as a personal life, toward other persons, and toward God, is the chief thing to be sought; and it is the only issue of this ceaseless struggle

which can be accepted by the truly rational mind.

As to the bearing of this truth on certain classes of human beliefs, I may be permitted to quote from another treatise ("Philosophy of Religion," vol. I, p. 319): "Religion stands in special need of this process of separation and purification for the work which it calls upon the creative imagination to perform; and the chief reasons for this need are the following two. Its primary beliefs are essentially of the *in*-visible, the *non*-sensible, the somehow *super*-human, the Self that is *other* than myself. Moreover, the practical and emotional interests to which the work of religious imagination is committed are so immediate and impressive as the more easily to override the considerations upon which the scientific development of man lays so much emphasis. Superstitious beliefs, born of unworthy and irrational hopes and fears and desires, have never been confined to religion. But, in religion, on account of its very nature, they have been most potent and difficult to modify or remove. Hence, the necessity, but also the embarrassment and the delicacy, of improving the work of imagination in the construction of an Object of religious

belief which shall worthily fit in with the system of human experience, rationally regarded and, as far as possible, scientifically explained.

"The religious development of mankind is dependent upon the harmonious activity of imagination and intellect in providing an Object, which shall accord with scientific development, and shall also keep pace with the ethical and æsthetical feelings, and with the growing practical and social needs of the race. This truth follows, as of necessity, from what we know respecting the genesis and development of religion. But its explanation and proof requires the consideration of the important part which the intellect takes in man's religious life and development."

In his *Theologische Ethik* that rather abstruse and difficult but astonishingly suggestive writer, Dr. Richard Rothe, makes the claim that in its blending of belief and knowledge the moral and religious view of the world is every whit as securely founded in man's reason as is the scientific view. Just as in all science there is involved both perception (the intuitive element) and reflection (the activity of thought), so in religion there is that immediate grasping of the truth which we call faith, and the reflec-

tion which evolves the contents of faith and so makes legitimate the systems of theology. This two-sided activity of the self-conscious will affords by faith a picture of the world which is quite as truly entitled to our acceptance, for corresponding to the reality, as is the picture of the same world when drawn by the positive sciences. We are, indeed, not as yet quite ready to justify this claim of Rothe, as arising out of the very nature of all belief; but we seem by our analysis to be preparing the way for it. True, this world "believed in," like the world "sensed-of," is not to be regarded as freed from all testing by the growth of experience, the accumulations of fact, the criticism of intellect. It may be as absurd, however, to say, "I will not believe in this thing, because I cannot see, hear, handle, smell, or taste it," as to say, "I will not trust my senses in seeing, hearing, handling and smelling or tasting things, because I believe in a really different world from that to which they testify."

In emphasizing the work of imagination in constructing, and of intellect in criticising, the object of belief, we have already introduced the discussion of the propriety and meaning of the phrase in recent times so current, — "The

will to believe." For imagination and intellect are forms of activity, and the term "will" is most properly applied to the entire active side of human, because personal, mental life. The will-to-believe, therefore, manifests itself, in its primary and initial stages, and yet extremely important form, in the willingness to attend and inquire respecting the grounds of belief. But there is something far more profound in the phrase than would be indicated by an admission like this. There are human beliefs, and not a few of them, on which the will lays hold with a strength and tenacity of grip which can, by no manner of sophistry, be made to appear as merely the result of a passive submission to the authority of others, or even to the compelling pressure of any consciously recognized and clearly understood argument. For, as has often been pointed out by all writers on the subject, we do not accept our most assured faiths as we do the conclusions of a demonstration in geometry, or the inductions of a long and carefully guarded series of laboratory experiments. We, the rather, seem to make more or less voluntary selections among them; although the reasons for our choice are by no means always self-evident, are, in fact,

often obscure, or if recognized at all, are far from affording a complete logical satisfaction. The part that so-called "Will" bears in belief is, therefore, so important as to demand a somewhat more detailed and separate treatment.

The very form in which we have raised our general question connects it, however slightly and indirectly, with the idea of obligation. What *should* I believe? But why "should," rather than *can*, or *may*, or *must*, or *ought?* Some reader will be saying: "You may think that I should believe some things which I cannot believe; or that I should not believe some other things which I think it a privilege to believe, or which I even find myself under obligation to my intelligence or to my acquaintance with the positive sciences, to believe. And if by this word 'should' you mean to imply moral obligation in the more precise and compelling use, why do you not come out boldly and show the courage of your conviction, that, forsooth! you can teach me, or any other rational being, what we, who differ from you in your beliefs, really *ought* to believe?" Softly, Friend! for I do not think myself wise enough to define narrowly, much less to dictate, beliefs to any other, even the weakest intellectually

of living men. I am, on the contrary, somewhat firmly convinced of the truth of what Goethe said: "Faith is private capital, to be kept in one's own house. There are public savings-banks and loan-offices, which supply individuals in their day of need; but here the creditor quietly takes his interest for himself." But I also believe what the same author said in his "Essay on Shakespeare": "Through the feeling 'I should' (*Sollen*) tragedy becomes great and forceful; through merely 'willing' (*Wollen*) it remains weak and petty."

By this word, then (the word "should"), it is intended to call to mind and continually to emphasize the truth that the forming and constant reforming of our beliefs — where they are shown to need reforming — is a matter of moral concernment and truly involves us in a somewhat complicated net-work of subtle and difficult obligations. But this could not be so, if our wills had nothing to do with this process. However, the very nature of belief is such that the obligation is not generally, is perhaps only rarely, so definite and definitely compulsory as that which we feel with respect to the practical distinctions we demand in matters of the right and wrong of conduct.

On the whole, then, it would seem that there is no hope of defining all kinds and shades of belief in some off-hand way, so as to fit the definition for the immediate acceptance of any unsophisticated mind which consults the dictionary expecting to discover there in a form of words what will save him the trouble of doing a bit — indeed many bits — of hard and sober thinking. Our beliefs are very serious affairs. Out of them, even more than out of our knowledges, come the issues of life and death. But Belief itself is an extremely complicated and shifty affair. Its origin, in the meaning of the actual causes which have brought it to the birth, is almost uniformly hidden down and back in darkest recesses of the individual's personal or ancestral, or even racial, development. Its influential reasons are not clearly discernible by the intellect; otherwise, it is on the borders where belief becomes largely if not wholly identical with knowledge.

In respect of the confidence of belief, the assurance of faith, the steadiness and tenacity with which the mind holds to the truth of its invisible objective, this differs all the way from the border-land of doubt to depths and heights which no available arguments are able

to weaken or assault with any confidence of their own.

In constructing the object of belief, the imagination is habitually operative in a somewhat peculiar way. In general, the thing believed in is the invisible, the non-sensuous, the universal ideal or some example of it. But this mental construction may be somewhat sluggishly and impassively accepted from others, as when children believe that babies are handed down from heaven, or that fairies dance on the leaves of the lilies, or play hide-and-go-seek among their stalks. But for the greater beliefs of science and religion, the most transcendent powers of the most lofty and gifted human imaginations are taxed beyond their utmost capacity in the effort to form objects worthy of their attachment.

Nor can the intellect and reasoning faculties of man be neglected or flouted by any form or degree of human beliefs. Whether it be hobgoblins and ghosts, or Ether and Energy, in which men believe for the explanation of daily happenings, the belief cannot continue to shut the door in the face of observation, experiment, and reasoning. Whether the belief be in the atoms and the ions,

"We, they cry, are now creators,
Allah now may rest at last,"

or in the man-like gods of the most primitive forms of religion, or in the loftiest conceptions of Deity ever framed by philosopher or theologian, the rights of the intellect cannot be denied. No hand may slam the door in its face. In the true meaning of both words, neither Faith nor Reason can assume exclusive control of, and unlimited service from, the mind and life of man. But in the true meaning of the words, and in the true use of the faculties corresponding to these words, Faith and Reason are not antagonistic, but correlative and supplementary. This does not mean, however, that all our beliefs must be scientifically demonstrated, or even that they all admit of such demonstration. But as little does it mean that any of them can ever escape the requisition to inquire into its own reasons, and to strive continually to make itself more and more pure and serviceable by becoming more and more reasonable.

We shall not be far from the truth, then, if we describe the nature and province of belief somewhat as follows. The world of sense and of the forms and laws which the intellect con-

structs on a basis of sensuous perception, is underlain and interpenetrated and over-topped by another sort of world. In *this* world those sentiments and practical demands of the mind that concern the invisible and the ideal have their peculiar influence. It is the world of the things believed in rather than known as is the world of the things of sense. Its causes lie, often very obscure and generally deeply-hidden, in the constitution of the individual and of the race. The forms, the beliefs themselves, are more akin to instinct and to intuition than to scientific formulas. But they, too, by the growing intelligence and reflective energy of the individual and of the race, may be made increasingly more reasonable. For what Saint Bernard said of Reason and religious Faith has a certain truthfulness for all kinds of belief: "These two comprehend the sure truth; but faith, in closed and involuted, intelligence, in exposed and manifest, form."

Out of this view of the nature of belief follows the propriety and possible usefulness of attempting, at least partially, the question: What should I believe? in its relation to the two other questions, What can I know? and What ought I to do?

CHAPTER II

THE SO-CALLED "WILL TO BELIEVE"

THE brilliant writer on psychology, whose name has been most conspicuously connected with the phrase chosen for the title to this Chapter, announced his doctrine in a paper read some twenty years ago before the Philosophical Club of Yale University. Quite naturally, it was given at the first in a comparatively undeveloped, not to say crude form. But so suggestive was the phrase that it was speedily taken up by a series of controversial essays which, while few or none of them penetrated deeply enough into the subject to effect a complete analysis, served to assist its practical applications by clearing a path between two extreme and equally untenable views. One of these views attached itself to the most extravagant form of the Pragmatism which then followed. It assisted this Pragmatism, through an appeal to the emotions and the prevailing reluctance to think profoundly and conclusively, in its attacks on so-

called "Rationalism." Belief, if fervid enough in feeling, and sufficiently backed up by the wish to have things really so, and by the impression that the practical interests of men would fare better if things were really so, was made to usurp the province of intellect. To the work of clear thinking and carefully controlled argument (to refer again to the words already quoted from Mr. Balfour) a "petty rôle in human affairs" was somewhat contemptuously assigned.

In another system of philosophy—that, especially, of M. Bergson—intellect was essentially separated from so-called intuition, and the latter applauded as a distinct and superior kind of mental functioning for the attainment of truth. All these forms of the depreciation of the rationalistic, the only scientific and philosophical method of systematizing and making understandable the facts and laws of human experience, both with things and with selves, were really offspring in pretty nearly direct line of Schopenhauer's theory of "The Will to Live." For as every student knows, Schopenhauer reduced the intellect to the "petty rôle" of the tool, or slave, serving in a purely mechanical and unconscious way the

purposes of the blind and unreasoning Will to Live.

This extreme style of appreciating the province, the rights, and the obligations of the "will to believe," aroused and fostered, as a matter of course, the opposite no more tenable, and perhaps little less dangerous, extreme. The latter exaggerated the claims of the positive sciences; denied the freedom of the Self in the midst, so to say, of its beliefs, whether instinctive or rational, whether of degrading credulity or of exalted faith; and, on the contrary, affirmed the right and the possibility, and even, where it admitted any such thing as a genuinely moral attitude of mind, the obligation, to live by pure intellect alone. Human beliefs, however precious, ancient and practically useful, if they could not be demonstrated in geometrical fashion, or derived by strictly experimental methods under the safeguards against error which apply to the laboratories of physics, chemistry and biology, were to be at once assigned to the scrap-heap of "exploded" superstitions. On the one hand, then, we seemed seduced into a hot-house of unreasoned beliefs; on the other, driven into a desert barren of all the faiths, hitherto esteemed most pre-

cious, and found most practically useful by all humanity.

In beginning to discuss the essential morality of believing, and the relations which our faiths sustain to the free and responsible development of the Self, and to the honorable and safe conduct of the practical life, it is important to avoid both of the untenable extremes which have just been described. Such an escape can be effected, however, only if we grasp firmly the essence of the truth embodied in the phrase, "The will to believe"; and then somewhat carefully think our way through its limitations. That there is essential truth in this way of stating the attitude of mind involved in believing, we might argue from the hoary age and respectable lineage of the statement itself. For the doctrine of the will to believe in its modern form contains nothing essentially new.

Of all the ancient writers on themes of philosophy in its application to life, if we may judge from the fragments remaining, there were few or none who combined common-sense with shrewd reflective thinking in a degree superior to the lame slave, Epictetus. In his "Discourse of Eloquence" he says: "Whether we ought to believe or disbelieve what is said;

or whether, if we do believe, we ought to be moved by it, or not; what is it that decides us? Is it not the faculty of will?" And "Concerning the Academics," who refused to believe in the existence of universal truths, he declares: "Now there are two sorts of obstinacy; the one, of the intellect; the other, of the will. A man may obstinately set himself not to assent to evident truths, nor to quit the defence of contradictions. We all dread a bodily paralysis, and would make use of every contrivance to avoid it; but none of us is troubled about a paralysis of the soul." The best of the ancient Stoic doctrine, like the Christian doctrine, was essentially this: that a man's attitude of will toward the Divine Will, as the latter is expressed in all man's experiences, is what determines practical success in the conduct of life. If, then, we consider faith in God to be the essential of subjective religion, the will to believe becomes the ethical guaranty of a truly blessed and noble life. The faith that saves, wills as does the Divine Will.

In all modern literature, at least of the philosophical type, it is in the treatment of "Faith" by Fichte in the Third book of his "The Destiny of Man," that we find the loftiest and most

courageous defence of this attitude toward truth and reality, of the free will of man. "Shall I refuse," he asks, "obedience to that Inward Voice? I will not do it. I will choose voluntarily the destination which the impulse imputes to me. And I will grasp, together with this determination, the thought of its reality and truth, and of the reality of all that it presupposes. I will hold to the view-point of natural thinking, which this impulse assigns to me, and renounce all those morbid speculations and refinements of the understanding which alone could make me doubt its truth. I understand Thee now, Sublime Spirit! . . . I have found the organ with which I grasp this reality and with it, probably, all other reality. Knowledge is not that organ. No knowledge can prove and demonstrate *itself*. Every knowledge presupposes a higher as its foundation; and this upward process has no end. It is Faith, that voluntary reposing in the view which naturally presents itself, because it is the only one by which we can fulfil our destination — this it is that first gives assent to knowledge, and exalts to certainty and conviction what might otherwise be mere illusion. It is not knowledge, but a determination of the

will to let knowledge pass for valid. I hold fast, then, forever to this expression. It is not mere difference of terms, but a real deep-grounded distinction, exercising a very important influence on my whole mental disposition. All my conviction is only faith, and is derived from a disposition of the mind, not from the understanding."

In order to appreciate the essential truth which is in all the protestations, both ancient and modern, of the dependence of one's beliefs and faiths on that active attitude toward them which we call the will, and as well the legitimate claims to right and obligation, and to a large practical utility, which this attitude involves, we must clear our minds of the false contrasts and oppositions that are so often involved in the language employed by the disputants on the different sides. Stated in a broad and general way, the truth is involved in an undoubted fact of experience. The beliefs and faiths of mankind, whether of the scientific, social, moral or religious sort, are not just passively received and passively continued in the possession of our minds and in the control of our lives. We are not altogether slavishly obsessed by our beliefs. They de-

pend, in some degree at least, on our attitude toward them as being ourselves free wills, — wishing, desiring, hoping, choosing, and acting according to these wishes, desires, hopes, and choices.

But especially must it be made clear that our rational natures issue imperious and unceasing demands upon us to bring our wishes, desires, hopes, and choices into accord with reason, and with the facts of reality, and with the obligations of morally right conduct. Hence, we, in some sort, essay as wills to determine what our beliefs and faiths shall be, and as to how they shall shape themselves in their assumption to take control of our lives. But this freedom, like all human freedom, is more or less strictly limited, dependent upon heredity, environment, habit, and the thousands of varying degrees and shades in combination of those restrictive forces which condition the development of the infinite individuality of personal life.

Nor are the conditions, that limit and vary the amount and kind of freedom in different persons, making the will to believe much more rational and efficient in some cases than in others, determined wholly by the individual peculiarities of these different persons. They

are also quite as strictly, and in a valuable way, determined by the nature of the beliefs and faiths themselves. For there are some beliefs which almost any man can easily learn to throw off; or, on the contrary, learn to accept by an act of will. And of these there are not a few which it is well worth one's while to throw off; or, on the other hand, highly desirable promptly to accept. But there are other beliefs and faiths which the strongest and best disciplined wills can scarcely, by possible stress of effort, dispense with, or treat as of no account; and woe to the man who voluntarily succeeds in suppressing or obscuring them. There are still others, hitherto deep-seated in the minds of the race, that seem destined to profound modification, if not to final dissolution.

In order to bring our beliefs into the realm of morality, and so to give chance for a satisfactory answer to the practical question, What should I, in fact, believe? two things are indispensable. The attempt must be made to estimate these beliefs in the light of their claim to be reasonable; and the influence of the active and self-controlling Self must be thrown into the scale on the side of their reasonableness. What constitutes the "reasonableness" of any

particular belief or faith is a problem which deserves the most careful consideration. It is enough at present to say, that the satisfaction which belief affords to certain affections and emotions, and the usefulness which certain beliefs have in prompting the worthier interests of a practical sort, while not the only marks of rational significance, are by no means the least worthy of recognition and of influence in determining the wisdom of the choice.

It is the province of intellect to work at the task of exploring and estimating the reasonableness of our beliefs scientific and social, and of our ethical and religious faiths. In this task it — to speak figuratively — employs will; more properly expressed, it is itself *active* intellect, willing and self-directing mind. The results of its work impose upon the person a more distinctly moral kind of activity; this consists in the choice of the worthier, because more reasonable, among our beliefs, and in the cultivation of the habits of thought and conduct which place these beliefs in the control of the practical life. Thus in every form of science, all the powers of accurate observation, keen analysis, experimental testing, and logical inference, are employed to discover, so far as is possible, what

one of two contrasted or conflicting beliefs is most reasonable. The decision is apt to be governed by only varying degrees of probability; but it binds the mind to a choice which has a certain measure of moral significance. So, also, among the obscure and seemingly confused and conflicting instincts, blindly motived tendencies, and beliefs or personal faiths, which so largely regulate human social intercourse, and which make it to be the complicated and largely inexplicable thing that it really is, the intelligence of the students of human nature (and to this class of students every human being is in some sort forced to belong) is from time to time making distinctions as to their correspondence with the realities of the physical World and with the interests of the developing race. Thus these beliefs and faiths are made more obviously reasonable, or else, being convicted of too large a measure of unreason are rendered fit to be cast out and be burned, like the chaff which has been separated out of the wheat.

It is, however, in respect of its moral and religious beliefs and faiths, that the race has always enlisted the most highly imaginative, conscientiously logical, and strenuously devoted work of the inquiring and critical mind. Out

of the effort to render these beliefs and faiths more reasonable, all the ethics, the theology, the philosophy, and much of the literature and art of humanity, has derived its motives and directed its course. That the intellect of the race has not as yet reduced them to the terms of exact knowledge is neither to the discredit of the intellect nor of the beliefs and faiths themselves. If the failure illustrates the limitations — but by no means, the "petty rôle"— of the one, it does not demonstrate, or even credibly suggest, the unreasonableness of the other. For while morality and religion cannot afford to flout at the demands of intellect to make themselves more clear and apprehensible, if not more certainly matters of demonstration, their very nature renders them essentially unassailable by the destructive work of all rationalistic methods. These spheres of human experience are obligated to offer to the mind who has the righteous "will to believe" an ever brightening aspect of "sweet reasonableness." *In morals and religion, Faith and Reason must be united by an act of Will.*

But just as the will to believe must, on the one hand, be deferential to the reasonableness of its object, so on the other hand, must it purify

itself from all admixture of base motives, if it aims at the approval of moral consciousness. Not to regard the reasonableness of the belief to which the will is asked to attach itself, is to run the peril of an immoral choice. But he who wills to believe this rather than that, simply because this rather than that would more effectively serve his selfish ends, has already succumbed to the temptation which is the chief peril of all immorality. Disregard of sound reasons, issuing in the irrational or unreflective will to believe, is morally illegitimate will. It is will contributing to erroneous and practically misleading belief. But the will to believe, which is determined by greed, lust, partisanship, or other selfish considerations, is the very opposite of that good will in which the essence of goodness has so often been made to consist.

That what men *wish to be true*, they are, other things being equal, inclined to believe *is true*, is a practical conclusion which has been consecrated and enforced by much experience. To be sure, there are temperaments which, especially when they have been chastened by much disappointing experience, have come to believe that what they wish to believe is, for that very

absurd reason, all the less entitled to be believed as true. But setting aside these melancholy cases, it is notable, especially among the youthful and among all conspicuously hopeful souls, that their beliefs are very much influenced to turn in the direction of their wishes. The wish influences the belief, however, through the will, if indeed it influences it at all. There are several ways in which this influence may be exerted. In one or more of these ways this influence is actually exerted. For example: What one wishes to believe, to the arguments for that one wills to give attention. On the contrary, one wills to give less attention to the opposite belief, or to withdraw the attention altogether from it. Especially in matters of morals and religion, a vast multitude of men *will not* take their reasonableness into serious consideration; either because they do not wish certain beliefs to be true, or because they have already established their beliefs according to opposing tendencies. For not to wish at all, may lead to as unsatisfactory choices of one's faiths as to wish too violently, or to be guided by wishes that are selfish and prejudiced.

The influences of current opinion are also most powerful over the will to believe. To

believe differently from the great majority, — and this especially in important matters having moral or religious import, — puts a more or less definite strain from the feeling of responsibility upon the will to believe. This is precisely as it should be. For it is common opinion about matters, which have not as yet become, and perhaps never can become, matters of knowledge, that constitutes the chiefest and most valuable bond uniting any community in a social way, and binding the entire race into a spiritual unity. But the demands of reasonableness, although the wide-spread and persistence of beliefs is not the least important proof of reasonableness, are for the freedom of the will to believe, more commanding and more righteous, than the mere opinions of the most overwhelming majority. And history is full of instances where the faiths of a few, who appealed to the reasonableness of these faiths, came at the last to triumph over the beliefs unreasoningly prevalent among the majority.

Some fruitful thoughts concerning the nature and province of the will in believing, flow from the fact that certain human beliefs arrange themselves in pairs, both of which cannot be true, but one of which must be true. This

fact seems to force upon every thoughtful mind the necessity of a choice. And it must be a choice of *beliefs* rather than of knowledges; because the evidence is by no means conclusive — and in some instances, it is not even get-at-able — in either direction. In the region of abstract thought, this fact was much exploited by Sir William Hamilton in his "Law of the Conditioned"; by Dean Mansel in his "Limits of Religious Thought"; and by Mr. Spencer in his attempt to reconcile science and religion on the basis that the Power believed in as manifesting itself in all the phenomena is essentially the "Unknowable." Something of the same sort has been more recently done by Mr. Bradley in his brilliant exposition and criticism of human beliefs as appertaining to "Appearance and Reality." For instance — to take our illustration from the first mentioned of these authors: Space must be conceived of, if conceived of at all, as either in reality infinite or in reality conditioned or limited. But we cannot imagine, much less know it in either way. Our knowledge, therefore, moves along a sort of middle line, in neither one of the two extremes of which can we believe, for impossibility of imagination limits such belief; but one

of which we must consider to be really true. In religion, according to Dean Mansel's now almost forgotten book, our principal faiths with regard to the being of God are of essentially the same sort, so far as the grounds on which they repose are concerned. For ends of practical good, we choose between contradictories, neither of which is capable of being reasonable according to the demands for satisfaction of either intellect or imagination.

With regard to all such beliefs as the foregoing, when considered as a basis for practical morality or religion, not to say as affording any clue to a reasonable ground for either science or philosophy, or even for successful guessing or "trowing," one thing is enough to say. The substance of them resolves itself at once into nothing better than vaporous *abstractions*, to which no *thing in reality* corresponds. Or, even if this be not so, they do not afford grounds or guardians of belief or faith of any sort. They end in an agnosticism so profound that it cannot even state itself in terms intelligible to human minds without involving itself in hopeless absurdity. If the contradictory conclusions derived from these abstractions were applicable to real things and actual transactions

and relations, there could be neither knowledge nor belief, statable or defensible. We may prove that the space and time between the swiftly running Achilles and the slowly moving tortoise, or between the bow-string and the target when the flying arrow sets out for its mark, are capable of division and subdivision *ad indefinitum*, in a never-ending series of "little zeros" of diminishing numerical value. But we cannot be asked to believe that Achilles cannot actually overtake the tortoise, or the arrow reach its mark; for we know that both events are not only possible but sure to take place; and we can tell to within the fraction of a second how much time they will require for their actualizing. Neither can we be asked to choose between a God who is "The Infinite," or "The Absolute," and a man-like deity who lacks even as much of freedom, and dignity of power, and excellence of wisdom, as we know ourselves capable of attaining. In general, we cannot be asked to will to believe in the applicability to reality of either one of two incompatible and equally inconceivable abstractions. Incompatible abstractions have no right to determine or to limit either our knowledge or our faith with regard to experienced realities.

Besides these contrasted or contradictory abstractions, with regard to which the attitude of indifference or of complete agnosticism is the only rational one, there are other "pairs of beliefs," where it is desirable or imperative that the will to believe should grasp firmly one of the two. For such beliefs, there are reasons on one side, and reasons on the other and opposite side. Yet, only one of the two must represent the truth of reality. Perhaps we despair of sure knowledge as to which of the two beliefs is really true. But for purposes of understanding the world, or safe-conducting of the practical life, we feel bound to make a sort of choice between the two. Of such beliefs, many are comparatively trivial, while others belong to the most profound and influential of all similar attitudes of mind.

As lying at the foundations and defining the goal of all science, there are two contrasted if not opposite views of the cognizable complex of things and souls, of what science calls "Nature," philosophy sometimes calls "The Being of the World," and poetry "The Cosmos," or some other imaginative term. On the one hand, this complex may be believed in as in reality nothing more than what the positive

sciences know it to be, — namely, a mechanism of motions of visible and tangible masses and molecules, related in an imaginary time and space, in ways approximately corresponding to mathematical formulas. And to some minds this belief presents many evidences in favor of its rationality. Indeed, if we check our inquiry at certain fixed limits, deny our imagination its higher flights, repress some of our intellectual aspirations and other emotions, this belief would seem to have the greater weight of evidence in its favor. On the other hand, there is the opposed belief, which sees Mind and Will and other spiritual characteristics, even of the ethical order, underlying, interpenetrating, and controlling all the mechanism. *This is the faith in a world of reason as the only real and satisfactory explanation of the world of sense.* Those who hold this faith claim — and with good show of practical fruits — that it is really much the more satisfactory to the rational sentiments and ethical needs of humanity. We do not say that every student of the world from the scientific point of view *must* choose between these two conflicting beliefs; for by no means every so-called "scientist" feels the compulsion to use his powers of reflective

thinking, and attain the faiths that follow, to any high degree. But we do think that any one who reflects upon the knowledge of things visible as urging the mind to the belief in the invisible, will finally see the propriety and the utility of making this choice.

So, too, in the realms of the social, the moral, and the religious concerns of humanity, there are pairs of important and comprehensive but rival beliefs, between which it is highly desirable, if not quite imperative, that every thoughtful man should make a choice. Such are the beliefs of Pessimism and Optimism in the interpretation of history, of Idealism and Utilitarianism in ethics, of Theism and Atheism or Agnosticism in religion.

It is scarcely necessary to illustrate the important part which the choice of beliefs plays in the daily conduct of every human life, — especially so far as every life is conducted with some regard for the consequences of conduct in more or less full view. In business, men face such calls upon the will to believe every day of their lives. Shall this customer be trusted, or not? Shall this opportunity for investment be accepted or rejected? Shall this signature be believed to be genuine, or a forgery? Which

of two diseases shall the physician believe to be indicated by the symptoms of the patient? And which of the two physicians, who diagnose the disease differently, shall the patient believe? A choice must be made between two beliefs, and the evidence for either is far from being clear. In some cases, indeed, it seems a sort of "toss-up" which way the will to believe should turn. In other cases we try, with more or less success, to convince ourselves that the evidence inclines, at least slightly, in favor of one or the other of the two beliefs. We desire to avoid the appearance of having chosen unreasonably or on grounds of mere caprice.

It seems, then, that the very nature of human beliefs, both as attitudes of mind and as related in reality to the objects of these beliefs, makes them dependent in a measure on human wills. They are attitudes of the Self, involving emotional stirrings, sentimental satisfactions, important practical needs; but they also make demands upon the activities of imagination, intellect, intuitive insight and calculated prescience as to probable results. They thus urge and stimulate that self-control which is the most precious divine gift to the spirit of man. And being measurably subject to self-control in the

interests of their own reasonableness and usefulness, they are moral as well as mental affairs. We may not, therefore, raise the question, "What *should* I believe?" — without the plain implication that our beliefs are no unimportant part of our equipment for the upright life. Not only does action depend on wish and desire in a sort of mechanical and half-physical way; but belief depends on choice in a manner corresponding to the rights and interests of the free spirit in man. The morality of the exercise of our will to believe, upon our accepted or rejected beliefs and faiths, is a sort of variable coefficient of our power to render them in harmony with the conclusions of the intellect and the higher interests of life. In the attempt to do this, however, we must never fail to remember certain essential differences between knowledge and even the most reasonable and well-founded beliefs. We must never forget that the good and wise man lives by his faiths even more than by the things which he surely knows and can state in acceptable scientific terms, — thus impressing them irresistibly upon his fellow men.

The practical import of the true doctrine of the will to believe is to put every man on his

guard toward the subject of his beliefs. The attitude of mind, to which we give this somewhat obscure and mystical title, should not be left to caprice or to hap-hazard, so to say. It is an enormously important thing for any individual, what his beliefs and non-beliefs really are. We are obligated to a careful selection among our beliefs. As capable of developing a *modicum*, if not a high grade of moral freedom, we have the permission of nature and of society to make this selection. We have the permission of nature; this permission is embodied in the very gift of moral freedom. We can, as a matter of fact, have something to say as to what we shall believe; and as to what degree of the confidence of belief we shall put into this or that matter soliciting belief. In no other sphere of our activity is society so much obliged to let us alone, whether it wishes to or not, as in the matter of our beliefs. Society is, indeed, like many of our individual acquaintances, often troublesomely curious, either in a friendly or a hostile way, to control our beliefs. But try as hard as it may, unless we will, it cannot compel them. More than any other part of our experience and our development, our beliefs and our faiths remain as we will to have

them. This incomparable freedom *of* belief is, however, no safeguard against an intolerable and degrading bondage *to* belief. It is, on the other hand, an exhortation to choose the best — the most reasonable and worthy and practically serviceable of beliefs.

Without this will to believe, in matters involving moral and religious truths, no man's path could be made tolerably clear, either for this life, or as to the life beyond this, — whether there be any such life, its nature, its issues, its awards. For as to these things, the intuitive vision of faith must take the place of the vision of the senses and of the unbiased calculations of science. "To see! to see!" says Conrad, "this is the craving of the sailor, as of the rest of blind humanity. To have his path made clear for him is the aspiration of every human being in our beclouded and tempestuous existence." The path along which our ideals are made clear is the path of faith. Will is the helmsman, and reason the compass, which must lay the course when no harbor is in view to sense.

To gain this vision of the "path made clear," however, one must never throw the weight of the will on the side of the wish, if the wish is

selfish, partisan, or inconsiderate. The will-to-believe what is true is the only rational and safe kind of the will-to-believe. The moral principle regulating the maxim is — not, that *is* true which we will to *believe* true; but our steadfast will must be to believe what has most seeming *really to be* true.

CHAPTER III

LESSER AND GREATER BELIEFS

THAT the various beliefs and faiths of men differ greatly in their weight and value is amply proved by our experience with them and by the language employed in describing them. This is true whether we take the individual or the racial and social point of view. In every person's estimate, grave distinctions are habitually made in the shadings of sunny confidence and the shadows of doubt which constantly pass over the fields of his mental life. On some of his own beliefs he himself looks with an amused curiosity, or with indifference and even, at times, with a sort of disgust. But others of them have so laid hold on the passive mind, or have been gripped with such a tenacious and fateful act of will, that to have them depart or be cast away would seem little less terrible than to have the soul itself torn asunder or cast out. Some of them, even when they are kept uninjured or apart

from the scepticism or agnosticism, if not renunciation, which a search into their meaning and their causes would surely bring about, are allowed scanty practical influence on the conduct of life. This is, indeed, the scandal of the moral and religious faiths of multitudes of men. But, on the other hand, certain beliefs, especially of the moral and religious order, which a more enlightened understanding or an increase of real knowledge has led the individual to desire to banish from his intellectual horizon, or to regard, perhaps, as a species of deceptive mirage, still loom great and strong in the clouds of sentiment, or threaten with mutterings of distant thunder to decide, in spite of the soul's efforts to dispel them, the very issues of life and death.

What is true of the individual person is true in a much more impressive and compelling way of society at large. It is even true of the historic development of the race. Mankind in general has always taken its different beliefs and faiths as differing in practical importance and ideal value. Some of the most persistent and ubiquitous of them have always seemed to lend themselves most readily to the merriment of the thoughtless, or to the despite and

scorn of the caste of the "intelligents." Girls giggle and tremble at the same time, as they listen to tales of haunted houses and sheeted ghosts. The superstitious savage does the one thing before, and the other thing after, the actual appearance of the ghost. Learned professors investigate, to the end of putting no little "faith" in even the most vulgar of spiritualistic phenomena; while other no less learned professors jeer at their credulous comrades, and in the name of "Germanic culture" avow that *they* would not believe in a miracle, if they saw one with their own eyes; or in the resurrection of the body, "even though one rose from the dead," as its most visible and tangible demonstration. On the contrary, they who all their lives long "have been in bondage" to such a theory of mechanism as to destroy all faith in prayer, are not infrequently, on the deck of some sinking ship, discovered with blanched cheeks, bended knees, and uplifted hands.

But what about all this, — except, perhaps, to prove the inconsistency of human nature, the limitations of human knowledge, the uncertainty and changeableness, and inefficiency of all human beliefs? They who claim to have had ample experience for a perfect induction,

not infrequently profess to have found all men, and *a fortiori* all women, faithless; so that *their* practical maxim is to trust nobody implicitly, and (why should we not reverse it?) not to expect any one to trust them. But such persons do not consider that to carry out in practice so sweeping a system of unbelief would give the lie to all science, and would bring all human social and business intercourse to an untimely end. Of course, there could no longer be any talk of moral and religious ideals, or any obligation to particular forms and courses of conduct as based upon these ideals.

We cannot, however, dismiss off-hand our question, "What should I believe?" in this unsettled manner. To be sure, no promise has been made to inform any inquirer, much less to dictate to any anxious soul, just precisely what he must adopt as his system of scientific, social, moral, and religious beliefs. But we did hold out the hope that some guide-posts might be set up along the way of reasonable and practically useful beliefs. More especially, we discerned in the very manner of asking the question a hint that the mind which wills to believe, in a persistently honest and devoted way, may obtain some light on that path of

faith which, if followed, leads more and more out into the "light of the perfect day." Thus one might reasonably hope to escape that "paralysis of the soul" through unbelief which Epictetus so long ago justly described as much more terrible than paralysis of the body.

The desirable end after which we are just now groping, can be attained only by making distinctions in human beliefs and faiths. They must be somehow measured as to their weight and their value. In this way only can we judge of the obligations under which they place us, and of the advantages which they offer to us. Especially does this making of distinctions seem necessary in the domain of human moral and religious ideals, and in the faiths or doubts with which men face these ideals.

All measurements of weight and value, however, whether of things material or of things spiritual, require the application of some standard of measurement. How then shall we determine the weight and value of human beliefs and faiths? There are some standards which are obvious and convenient. They may have a certain degree of usefulness; but they are not absolute. They are subject to changes in circumstance, or to the growth of positive

knowledge, or to the infinite individuality which is so valuable a characteristic of all the higher developments of personal life. Can we not, however, find some standard of measurement which inheres in the very substance of personal life; or, perhaps, in the very bones of the universe, so to say?

In practice, men are apt to estimate the weight and value of their beliefs and faiths by the degree of confidence which, at the moment, they repose in them. This kind of estimate is by no means wholly unreasonable. For just as "being sure" is a somewhat essential factor in all knowledge, so a certain amount of confidence is an indispensable factor in all kinds and degrees of belief. And further, just as there are degrees of knowledge, so are there degrees of belief. In no small degree, the quality and amount of our confidence measure the weight and the value of our beliefs. Even Kant proposed to decide debates of this character by the amount which he who held the confidence was willing to bet on the future issue which should test the "objective certainty" of the subjective state. This way of measuring such certainty, and as well the practical usefulness of the states of mind we call believing

rather than knowing, has not yet gone out of date. Perhaps it never will; for, although to make the stake one of the laying down of money on the card-table or the table of roulette may be considered immoral, the very essence of morality compels us to stake interests more important than any amount of money, on the degree of confidence which distinguishes, *for us*, our momentary but practically indispensable belief.

The degrees of belief, as characterized by the subjective confidence which enters into them, vary all the way from that passionate conviction of the truth of certain judgments which we hold on account of the value they have for other interests than merely our intellectual satisfaction, to that kind of weakly but obstinate attachment which we yield toward certain conventions and dogmas that have conspicuously failed to satisfy the demand for reasons in their behalf. These degrees are not only in fact effective, but are also reasonably influential in the determination of the will to believe. But the degree of confidence in one's believing, even less than the being sure of what one assumes to know, affords no absolute, and not even any steady and relatively depend-

able, guaranty for the reasonableness of one's beliefs and faiths.

Neither can we fall back on demonstration, after the method of either so-called pure mathematics, or the empirical formulas of the positive sciences, to afford us a perfect measure of the weight and value of human beliefs and faiths. The embodiment of our ideals, the satisfaction of our sentiments, the securing of the impressions and habits for the life of conduct, enter too essentially into all the believing and trusting attitudes of the human soul. And these are values which cannot be calculated by algebra, or plotted in curves, or sufficiently weighed by laboratory methods. The only path — if any there be — to the discovery of these values is that of psychological analysis based on an ever broadening experience as to what is in the spirit of man, and helped out by constant appeal to history. Without this analytic and historical study of the human spirit, of the personality that every human being is "potentially," as the phrase is, or in embryo, we shall seek in vain for any even approximately correct standard by which to estimate the weight and the value of human beliefs and faiths. In a word, those beliefs

and faiths are to be deemed the greater, in any comparison of fair values, which belong most essentially to the *Substance of the Self;* which have actually most weight and most value for promoting the permanent interests and contributing to the choicest developments of the personal life. In the market of faith, as in the market of pelf, it is "skin for skin"; but "all that a man hath will he give for his life."

It is scarcely necessary to illustrate the numerous lesser beliefs which operate with no little effectiveness to control the conduct of the daily life of every individual. One believes that it will rain or snow tomorrow; and on being asked to tell the reason why, one appeals to the look of the sky, the feel of the air or the feeling in one's bones, if not to the report of the weather-bureau; or else one confesses to an inability to assign any reason for such a distrustful attitude of mind. The state of tomorrow's weather, like the state tomorrow of a fluctuating market, affords unlimited opportunities for the opinions and guesses which are devoutly christened as articles in our lesser beliefs. But the importance to us as individuals merely, of any particular belief or form of

trust, does not avail to raise it from the class of the trivial to the rank of beliefs that are great because of their supreme importance and value. The man who is ill, or even the man who is well, may say with sincerity: "I believe that I am going to die on such a date," or, "I do not believe that my friend will ever be well again." There are few whose hearts are not rent and their judgments confounded by finding that the men and women in whom they had most implicitly believed, to whom they had indeed most tightly "pinned their faith," have proved unworthy and deceitful. But important as such beliefs and faiths are for the individual, and valuable as they may be in influencing all that the individual holds most dear, they do not belong to the class which we have called "the greater," in the sense in which we are now employing the term.

We repeat, then, that judged by the truest and most enduring standards, only those beliefs and faiths are truly great, which, for their intrinsic importance and value, depend upon a valid conception of the constitution, course in development, and final issues, of personal life. They constitute the "substance of the Self."

Doubtless we shall be for the moment misunderstood if we re-affirm, that only those beliefs and faiths are really great which belong to the substance of the Self; and especially if we add, that of all these beliefs the central one, the root-belief, as it were, is the belief of the Self in Itself. We hasten, then, to do what is in the power of words appropriate to the present phase of our general theme, to remove this risk of misunderstanding. For we abhor the philosophy of Nietzsche; we are no admirers of the "Overman."

It needs only a *modicum* of reflection, however, to see that the consciousness of being real, of being a self-directing will, and to some good degree an efficient centre of force producing more or less important effects, is the point of starting for all knowledge of, and all belief in, what we call real. The belief that anything else is real depends upon the belief that I am real. Strictly speaking, this conviction of the reality of the Self as active will is not a matter of knowledge, given bit by bit in items of sensuous perception or in brief periods of so-called self-consciousness. By use of the senses I have now this and now that presentation of an object arising in consciousness.

This instant I am "minding" a tree; the next a star; the next the face or the words of some friend. But unless all these different "mindings" evoked the fundamental belief in a reality not-myself, there would be for me no world of things and of men in which I might realize and develop my own personal life. And what do I get by way of items of knowledge, when I, as the phrase now thought so old-fashioned is, "turn my thoughts in upon myself"? No envisagement of a reality that lasts beyond the phenomenon of seeming to catch for a fraction of a second only, the thought, the feeling, the sensuous experience, which immediately slips away from my conscious grasp. To the knowledge that comes bit by bit through self-consciousness, we are ourselves, if *without faith*,

> "no other than a moving row
> Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go";

and not less so is

> "this Sun-illumined Lantern held
> In Midnight by the Master of the Show."

For it is this invincible belief in the reality of the Self, that in all personal life attaches itself to the being of the active will, in which all belief in the reality of the world of things and

men has its fertile root. This fact that in every thing which the person does, or knows other objects of his knowledge, things or persons, to be doing, he "*posits*" his own reality and theirs, after the type of an active will, is the faith which Fichte wished to make the basis of his moral philosophy, as well as of his theory of the world, according to the passage quoted in the last chapter. It was somewhat the same thought which Goethe had in mind when he uttered the meaningful sentence, "In the beginning was the deed," as the principle explanatory of all concrete existences. All existences depend for their reality, and all relations between them, for their actuality, on metaphysical beliefs. But the root of all these beliefs is the ontological faith of the Self in itself.

It follows from this truth as a hint toward the answer to the question, What should I believe? that every one who realizes the fullest possibilities of being a personal life, must believe in his own soul, — its reality, its efficiency or power to count in the world of things, but especially in the conduct of its own life, and in its own supreme worth. Without this belief one cannot answer, cannot even raise for

a rational answer, the question of Jesus: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Without this faith, one may easily be led to bargain away one's soul for that which has no comparable value.

But bare will is not all of personal life and personal development which has value; nor is the belief of the Self in its own reality as a Will the only form of belief which belongs to its very substance (to use again the phrase that already has been partially explained and justified). The Self irresistibly believes in itself as capable of knowledge. It has faith in itself as a cognitive Self. One of the most important and fundamental of all human beliefs, and certainly the one which has most to do with making science possible, is the belief of the mind in its own capacity for knowledge. This is the faith that underlies and accompanies all that psychologists call "the cognitive consciousness." "Let us keep to that grand general conception," says the Duke of Argyll ("Philosophy of Belief," p. 25f.) — "about which there can be no doubt whatever — that we are born in, and out of, that natural system in which we live — that we are children, not aliens in its domain — partaking, in the highest

degree, of all its highest adaptations to function, to work, to thought." But he at once goes on to add: "Nothing can give us so firm a trust that our faculties, when duly exercised and kept within the area of their adapted powers, do really catch and reflect the rays of eternal truth. All our knowledge implies nothing less than this." This confidence is, however, the contribution of *trust* to science; or, better said, it is the element of belief which enters into all human knowledge. It is the confidence of reason in itself, — a confidence absolutely essential to the equipment and the development of all personal life. In this confidence, whether it be in matters of science or of so-called ordinary knowledge, reason is often for the time disappointed, but it is never utterly confounded.

Of the underlying intellectual beliefs which make all human knowledge possible, and which decide the forms and limitations of such knowledge in an irresistible and final way, we shall attempt no detailed analysis, or even enumeration. Only as they operate to give laws to the intellect, is knowledge of any sort possible; only as their valid application to the realities coming within the field of human science is taken on faith, is any guaranty of scientific

truth attainable. As axioms and postulates incapable of demonstration by a series of logical steps, but irresistibly believed in, they underlie all mathematics and all the mathematical sciences. In the form of unquestioned assumptions, as to the truth of which common-sense considers it absurd to admit a doubt, they condition and control all the practical affairs of men, knowledge about which is the indispensable safeguard of their successful conduct. They reach out into the domain of abstract and speculative thinking, and compel the thinker to admit into his final explanation something besides the factors which derive from the senses and the inferences from their experiences. They demand a kind of reflective thinking which shall take due account of sentiment, of feeling, of intuition, and of faith, in philosophy's speculative construction of the World, and of its "Ground," and of our relations to it. Hence the persistent belief that human reason can grasp the supersensible in some form of "inner experience, which Fichte called intellectual, Schelling artistic, Schleiermacher religious," — although the adjectives in this sentence quoted from Professor Thilly do not seem altogether well-chosen.

The man who will have none of faith mixing with his knowledge, and who, in his effort to get rid of all forms of belief that are contributory to the conception of an invisible and ideal Universe, and which thus explain the relations and doings of the visible complex of phenomena, thinks to accomplish his purpose by retreat to the positions of an uncompromising agnosticism, must virtually annihilate himself. Nothing that must be believed in shall be admitted — so he is resolved — into his universe. No play of sentiment, no construct of soaring imagination, no faith in mere ideals, shall tarnish the purity, or obscure the superficial clearness, of *his* theories of the world of things and of men. But such an attempt at suicide of the Self can never succeed. For such an agnostic takes with him in his retreat just the very same constitution of the Self, with just the same irresistible faiths and clinging beliefs, as are those which restrain his fellows, who refuse to accompany him in his sceptical flight. The rankest agnosticism is shot through and through with all the same fundamental intellectual beliefs, all the same inescapable rational faiths, about the reality of the Self, and about the validity of its knowledge. You cannot save science and

destroy all faith. You cannot sit on the limb of the tree while you tear it up by the roots.

But something more than those beliefs which attach themselves to activity of the will, and to the work of the intellect, are necessary in order to constitute and to consecrate a truly personal life. The confident self-assertion of the Self, its belief in its own reality and power to produce effects, may become monstrous, as it actually has become in the philosophy of Nietzsche and the doctrine of the Overman; and in the political theory that might dominates right,—so baleful in its influence upon a nation's thought and conduct. Add to this belief, the confidences of the most ambitious and towering intellects, and all the achievements of knowledge with which such intellects are crowned, multiplied many fold, and you have not yet the making of a *real* man. For a "real man" is a person; and a person has moral and social beliefs. Indeed, in the strife over the conflicting conclusions of the intellect with regard to the nature and laws of the physical universe, the higher science recognizes its obligations to these moral beliefs. For in its sight the conclusions of the intellect are not just bare truth, but truth that has value because it is truth.

Otherwise, we could feel no glow of approbation at the words of the scientific and pious prelate Paul Gerlach:

> "I rue no path on which my spirit entered
> In science's service, solemnly and deep."

There is something more, then, than a superficial relation between the soul's faith in itself and faithfulness in conduct. The relation is constituted and enforced by a whole system of beliefs that belong to the most essential factors of the personal life. It is, moreover, illustrated by the experience of every individual and by the history of the race. For both the experience of the individual and the history of mankind evince the actual as well as logical connection between faith in the Self as a cognitive will, and the belief in the efficiency and value of faithful work. The lesson for the sower, of the "Parable of the Sower," is this; — that, although only a fraction of his sowing brings fruit visible to the senses, he must still sow generously in faith and hope. From this point of view we cannot adopt the opinion of the "devout chemist," Michael Faraday, who wished to make an absolute distinction between a moral or religious belief and an "ordinary belief." "Ordinary belief!" what phrase can be more

vague and indefensible? On the contrary, the very ordinariness of all fundamental moral and religious beliefs is *prima facie* evidence of the "soul of truth" that is in them.

That the very constitution and the development of personal life require an equipment of fundamental moral beliefs is a proposition which few would be inclined, when once they understand it correctly, ever to dispute. Morality is so obviously a matter of imagination, of sentiment, of convictions that come we know not whence and offer to conduct us we cannot just see whither, as to make the prominence of its faiths an affair of universal experience. For these are the chief characteristics which separate off our beliefs and faiths, on the one hand from our guesses and our opinions, and on the other, from the domain of knowledge and the exact sciences. When we say, "I am fully convinced," or "I am perfectly sure," that this is right (morally) and that is wrong, we do not mean to appeal to a mathematical demonstration, or to a string of strictly logical inferences; or even to a quite clear insight into a series of consequences sure to follow our action. We appeal, the rather, to the spontaneous announcement of our moral consciousness. And moral

consciousness is largely, is even chiefly, a collection of faiths attaching themselves to ideals of the imagination.

In another volume of this series of attempts to throw light on four questions of the greatest practical importance to *all persons* ("What Ought I to Do?") we have shown how the sentiments of moral obligation, of moral approbation and disapprobation, and the judgments of merit and demerit, with the beliefs that accompany and support these sentiments, have developed from the feeling of "the ought" (Chapter II); how the sentiments of Moral Freedom and of the imputability of conduct, and the beliefs which consecrate the administration of every form of justice, arise from the feeling "I can" (Chapter V); and how it is only "Moral Tact," with its trained intuition and sensitiveness of sentiment, which enables even the most strong of will and learned in matters pertaining to all variations of the different alleged causal series, to pick one's way along the difficult and often cloudy path of duty to ourselves and to others. (Chapter X.) All this is only to say and to prove in another way, how much, in all matters of morality, we follow instinctive and blind beliefs until we can by

reflection and a moral choice raise them to the dignity of rational faiths. But were it not for these convictions, and their binding and guiding power over the conduct of the personal life, there could be no moral development, and, indeed, no such thing as human society. Such essential and potent factors of personality, its constitution and its development, are the fundamental moral beliefs and faiths of humanity. They, too, are of the very substance of the Self. And for this reason they, too, are among the incomparably greater beliefs and faiths of the human race. More even than the intellectual beliefs, are these ethical beliefs the very life-blood of a vigorous and conquering personality, — in the individual, in the nation, in the entire race.

We have already seen that the "greater beliefs" must be appealed to in every effort to vindicate the power of the intellect to penetrate into, and to interpret, the experience of objective reality. This process of penetrating and interpreting is all a species of personifying. It culminates in the scientific faith in the rational Unity of Nature; and in the religious belief in one rational Will, the personal Absolute, whom faith calls God. But neither of

these faiths, in any of its attempts to establish define and defend itself, can escape the obligation to be reasonable; and in all attempts to bring about harmony between them, the same obligation must be laid upon the consciences of both. Willful self-assertion, the pretence of knowledge which goes way beyond the reality, controversy which conducts itself without supreme regard for the faiths of morality, or in stupid ignorance of these faiths, is as unseemly and futile in the one as in the other. In all their controversies, both science and faith are bound to be both reasonable and moral. For if science thinks it has a greater assurance of knowledge, it, too, cannot forget that its ultimate foundations and highest towers and steeples are laid in unproved but invincible beliefs. And religion need not be abashed, or less confident and joyful in its convictions, because they do not admit so freely of illustration, not to say confirmation, by the sensuous experiences of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. For, in general, the things of faith, whether we assign them to the department of science, or of morals, or of religion, are not to be got at, or understood, or appreciated, in this way. But we are anticipating what needs a fuller development.

From the practical point of view, the greatest and most effective, both upon the inner life of the soul and upon the life of conduct, of all human beliefs, is the faith in a Living God, or ever-active and immanent, perfect Ethical Spirit. This belief does not identify the world in which science believes, with God; but it refuses to vacate this world, or any part of it, of God. It also denies the adequacy of the mechanical explanation of the world; and it thus asserts that to understand and to interpret the phenomena with which experience makes us acquainted, whether phenomena of physical nature or of psychical nature, and their respective developments, something more than the facts and laws that constitute the body of the positive sciences is necessary. Only the belief in a Living God furnishes the explanatory and illumining principle necessary to understand the world. In the one World, room must be made for the ideals of the spirit and the realities of sense.

It remains just to notice in this connection, that the relation between the will to believe, and these different greater faiths which are all of them essential to the constitution and development of the personal life, is far from being

in all cases exactly the same. Most of the intellectual beliefs continue to operate in a quasi-compulsory way, whether they are consciously accepted with confidence as guides to the will, or not. We have little or no choice as to whether we will believe, in some sort or to some extent, in the reality of our own Self and of other selves and of things; in the actual operation of the law of sufficient reason; in the actuality of the relation of cause and effect; and in other similar forms of belief. But our moral and religious faiths do not stand in precisely the same relation to the attitude of the choice, which seems to us and to others, to accept or to reject them. These faiths are more delicate, more complex, more subtle, more apparently escapable, so to say. But they are by no means gone from the unwilling soul, even when they seem to be so. The soul, even when "paralyzed" by the extremest "obstinacy of intellect" is never quite dead to the quickening power of its inalienable moral and religious beliefs and faiths. To lack them wholly would be to cease being a person in any true and valuable meaning of that term. To lose them completely and forever from the soul is to lose the soul.

CHAPTER IV

RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF BELIEF

THE discovery that all the greater beliefs enter as factors into the very "substance of the Self" — that is, help to form the constitution and to set the conditions for the successful development of the personal life, — has given us a valuable clue to the answer of the practical question: What should I believe? But it has by no means furnished a completely available answer to that question. We already know that we must have faith in the reality, efficiency, and value of our own selves, and in the authority and value of our powers of knowledge, when rightly employed in finding out the existence and nature of the objects of knowledge, other selves and things. But we do not yet know the more definite causes and limitations of this faith, — as to what we really are, as well as that we really are; and as to the particular spheres and conditions of our efficiency in action, or

how we shall by cultivation attain it in higher degrees. Even less does this bare belief give us the answer to the question, What can I know? or, How definitely shall I apply this general belief in my capacity for *some* knowledge of what is real and true, to the enlargement of that capacity; and, finally, to the attainment of the utmost possible of the most valuable knowledge. The will to live compels the so-called will to believe that I am an active cognitive Self; but it does not furnish me with the reasons for trusting, or the rules for regulating, this belief.

The insufficiency of the general answer afforded by the discovery that certain beliefs, which constitute, define and consecrate the moral and religious nature of man, are indispensable to personal life, is even more apparent. For, as has already been pointed out, the attitude of the will to believe, toward all such beliefs, is somewhat conspicuously different from that which characterizes our "intellectual beliefs." In order to *be moral* (the word "moral" is here used in its widest signification, so as to include every species and degree of bad as well as good conduct), — in order to have moral being at all, one must more or less consciously will to

believe in moral distinctions and moral values. This is, however, a kind of faith which does not appear to be forced in the same way as the belief that two and two are four; that the three angles of a triangle are equal in sum to two right angles; or that every effect must have a definite and adequate cause, — as the popular statement of a much misapprehended principle of reasoning in matters of physical relations is apt to run. But in order to be truly moral or truly religious, — not to say, truly good and sincerely devout, — it would seem necessary that one should hold certain beliefs in a "willfull" and definite way. The faiths of morals and religion have a character which implies more of a grip on the will by the way of conscious choice. Even this kind of will to believe, with the precious comforts and rewards of the faiths which invite the will, does not of itself sufficiently inform the inquiring mind just what it should believe. The belief that all conduct has moral value, and that this value is great, or even incomparable, and lays an unconditioned mandate upon the will, does not by any means suffice to tell the inquirer just what he ought to do. In similar manner: The belief in the existence of invisible personal

agencies, with which man holds relations that have something to do with determining man's weal or woe, if we consider this the minimum to which the so-called religious consciousness can be reduced, is far enough from justifying such a faith in God as shall satisfy a rational inquiring human mind.

We see, then, that not even all the greater beliefs can dispense with other claims upon the will to believe than just this, that they belong to the constitution of a personal life, if they are going to assert their rights, or place us under a moral obligation to accept them. That a man must have some sort of moral and quasi-religious, as well as intellectual beliefs, follows from the fact that he is a man. Without these beliefs, he would not be a man at all, in the fullest meaning of the conception of a man. But what sort? What quality of such beliefs and faiths is it that enforces their claims to acceptance in something better than a vague and practically inefficient way; and that, therefore, constitutes and enforces the obligations they impose upon us? And what shall be the test, if any satisfactory test there may be assumed to be, of the right sort? Only the right sort of faiths have the right to command,

or even to solicit, the will to believe. Only this sort can properly be supposed to put a personal being under obligations.

Now, the answer to such questions as those which have just been raised, springs with a fine and impressive spontaneity to our lips. To have such rights, and to impose such obligations, the beliefs and faiths of a person endowed with reason and moral freedom, must appear as *reasonable*. Virtually, this demand to be "reasonable" is precious, and must be regarded so, in the estimate of all men alike. The opponents of "Rationalism," technically so-called, whether from the standpoint of theological dogmatism, agnostic scepticism, Bergsonian intuitionism, or Pragmatic emotionalism, are all alike averse to being called "irrational," or suspected of a lack, in any respect, of the most perfect reasonableness. For, indeed, in the last resort, all human opinions, beliefs, and hopes, as well as all scientific conclusions and common-sense maxims, must be tested by their rationality. But "being reasonable" is by no means always the equivalent of being conscious of reasons that, without any admixture of belief, make demonstrably clear to the intellect the grounds on which belief itself is founded.

Indeed, in this sense there are no altogether reasonable attitudes of mind, whether classified as beliefs or as "knowledge-judgments."

If complete acquaintance with all the reasons were necessary in order to be "reasonable," there could be neither knowledge nor faith entitled to the compliment of the term. Science and religion would both become "irrational."

On this point I have elsewhere said ("Philosophy of Religion," vol. I, pp. 305 f.) chiefly with regard to the religious nature: "The conception of man's rationality is comprehensive and varied, not to say vague and uncertain, in large measure because its content is so profound, manifold, and in some respects mysterious. Man has never yet succeeded in fully understanding his own rational nature." And again: "If analysis should succeed in disclosing all the secrets of man's rational life, in the stricter meaning of the word 'rational,' we should not in this way be put into possession of the entire account of his religious experience. For the *non-rational* which is by no means the same thing as the *contrary to reason* has its part to play in shaping this experience. But there is also very much in the higher forms of religious experience" (and, for that matter,

of all degrees and kinds of experience) "which defies or baffles the effort to interpret it in this way. This remark applies to the beliefs, the sentiments, and the practices of religion. In all these spheres of religious experience we come at last on certain unanalyzable and inexplicable facts." "Everywhere the principle of the dynamic unity of the soul in its various forms of functioning must be maintained. The action and reaction of the lower impulses and of the rational functions takes place in the unity of experience. Fear, hope, the desire for communion, and the sense of various needs, excite and direct the intellect and the imagination; and these faculties in turn create and modify the object of the various religious impulses and emotions. The higher ethical and æsthetical sentiments respond to those ideals which they have themselves induced the figurate and discursive faculties to create."

What is true of the greater beliefs and faiths of religion is, in substantially the same way, true of all our greater beliefs, scientific, social, moral, and æsthetical. Their reasonableness (if any one object, through historical associations or on account of prejudice, to the word "rationality") is their only conceivable, as it

is their nearest approach to an actually final, test. But by this test we must not understand their wholly scientific character, or the ease with which they lend themselves to mathematical treatment or to logical demonstration. Even the degree with which they minister to our more strictly intellectual satisfactions is not wholly dependent upon the manner in which we arrive at their proof, — whether by the methods of experimental science or of extended observation.

Any search for the marks of that reasonableness in which the rights and obligations of the different contesting or conflicting forms of belief consist, will greatly be helped by recalling in this connection the very important distinction between the causes and the reasons of man's beliefs and faiths. By "causes" we are now to understand the different influences which in fact give more definite shape to the greater beliefs and faiths of the individual. By "reasons" we mean the explanations which satisfy the intellect, and so influence in particular directions the will to believe, and support and defend the personal life in the choices which it has made.

Causes, when they are recognized as steady

in operation, universal or widely general in distribution, and of value for strengthening the grasp of will, may often very properly be considered as available reasons for according more of intellectual respect and confidence to any particular belief. We have already admitted that this is true even of that unanalyzed and untested confidence which constitutes for many minds the sole proof of some cherished belief; and which with all minds is of no little controlling influence over all their faiths. All men tend, and reasonably, to find a reason for the faith that is in them, in the very intensity of the conviction with which they cling to that same faith. They will to hold on to it as to a thing of value.

If, then, we can get at the causes which have operated to produce any intense and tenacious conviction, we often, perhaps generally, find that they have in them a measure of rational justification for the belief of which we are convicted. For example, one of the most frequent and powerful causes of the prevalent faiths of morals and religion is the early age at which the faiths were implanted. The popular perversion of the shrewd Jewish maxim — "Train up a child in the trade or handicraft in which

he is destined to go on in life, and when he is old he will not depart from it"— gives a sort of reason for abiding on the whole in the path of ancestral, almost we might say, inherited beliefs. It has been wisely as well as wittily said of the vagaries of certain current views of Pragmatism: "New theories are but the maxims of certain individuals; the old maxims represent the sense of centuries." But if venerable ancestry were made the sole, or even the most important test of the reasonableness of human beliefs and faiths, there would never be any progress either in knowledge or in believing.

Another potent cause which our beliefs, for the most part in an unrecognized but extremely seductive way, bring to bear upon the will, is the agreeable or disagreeable quality of the beliefs themselves. Now it is simple psychological fact, that agreeableness to our feelings has a marked influence on determining the seeming truthfulness of any judgment, whether held by the mind as a matter of knowledge or only as a more or less uncertain belief. In a way, it is true of our knowledges, as it is of our beliefs, that the relation they bear to our emotions is inevitably received as an item in their

favor or in their disproof. Men whose minds work in an orderly and methodical fashion, and to whom what is not obviously rational is also unlovely, no matter how devoted they may profess themselves to the bare facts, are not at all so apt to believe in a "pluralistic universe," as are minds of a more irregular, imaginative and artistic temperament. To the feelings of the latter type of a mind, too much semblance of unity and rational order has a distinctly disagreeable cast. They have the emotion of Tom Loker in Mrs. Stowe's novel, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," when he told the demure Quaker lady who kept tucking him up in bed: "If you bottle a fellow up too tight, I shall split."

Another powerful cause of differing beliefs is their harmony with convention, or widespreading acceptance. This cause not infrequently combines with the one just mentioned to influence one's beliefs in a doubly forceful way. Most people do not enjoy the disapproval of others in respect of the doubts and beliefs of the political, business, or social circle amidst which they move, or of the religious communion prevailing in their country or neighborhood. Indeed, that effect of custom which Mr. Bal-

four has so happily characterized as a "psychological climate," is one of the most prevalent and powerful causes of belief.

All these causes, whether operating "below the threshold of consciousness," or in the clearest light as well-recognized motives, have a certain claim to a certain kind of reasonableness. Speaking in a broad historical and philosophical manner, it is distinctly reasonable that mankind at large should regulate their beliefs and faiths in accordance with all three of these, in fact, most powerful influences. These are all causes which have the rights of reason. They are causes which, when recognized by the individual as reasons, put him under a certain amount of moral obligation in his attempt to answer for himself the practical question, What should I believe?

That the beliefs of olden time, the beliefs effected and consecrated by the experience of long lines of our ancestry should, in general, be assigned a title to a considerable claim to reasonableness, is, as an ethnological and social fact, a reasonable thing for the mind that reflects upon the conditions necessary for the most real and solid development of the race. So,

too, is it reasonable that the beliefs which are most consonant with the feelings of the race, especially those most in harmony with the loftier inspirations and purest sentiments of the race, should have the chance of preference largely in their favor, — at least, in the long run, as the saying is. But above all, it is very reasonable, and indeed the only condition on which any political or social, not to say more definitively moral and religious solidarity could be effected, that men should be inclined to something like substantial unity of belief under the influence of custom and implicit or express conventions. In evidence of our present contention, let any one ask himself this question: If you had the power to place Reason in control of human society and wished to secure its safe and sound development, how would you dispense with any of these causes and yet secure such a development?

These considerations furnish some maxims of a negative, if not of a strictly positive character, that are helpful toward the answer of our main inquiry. Similar maxims are found in the proverbs of all languages, savage as well as most highly cultured. They amount to the exhortation:

> "Hear counsel, and receive instruction,
> That thou mayest be wise in thy latter end."

And when some Elihu offers,

> "I will fetch my knowledge from afar,"

some experienced Job replies with biting sarcasm:

> "No doubt but ye are the people
> And wisdom shall die with you,
> But I have understanding as well as you;
> I am not inferior to you."

In a word, we all appeal to the belief that there is something of value in the conclusions of a long experience. For every individual who would form for himself a system of valuable and safe guides, it is by no means a bad practice to keep up the reminder: Do not despise the beliefs and faiths of your ancestors and of the multitude of your contemporaries, — especially those beliefs and faiths that have maintained themselves, substantially unchanged, through untold centuries of the history of the race. Even the persistent mistaken and superstitious beliefs, probably have a "soul of truth" in them. There are, indeed, in every generation current beliefs, and practices founded upon them, which are worthy of rejection as untrue and ethically contemptible; but the individual

cannot best evince his own reasonableness by giving to them an unreasoning rejection.

But neither inheritance and early implanting, nor the craving for agreeable and the aversion to disagreeable sensations, nor the unreflecting acceptance of what is current and customary, can render the beliefs of the individual reasonable and morally obligatory. To suppose this would render all social progress inexplicable, and all progress of the individual person impossible. Progress for the race has always been quite as dependent upon changes in the character of the beliefs and faiths of the race as upon the advance of the positive sciences. This is, of course, especially true of those beliefs which concern themselves with matters political, social, moral, and religious.

We need, then, further to inquire, What *by right* should determine our beliefs and faiths? Or, more definitely expressed, and regarded from the somewhat advanced point of view which we have already reached: What are the characteristics of that reasonableness for which we should look in regulating them?

In answering this question we are bound to say, first of all, that the amount of evidence in

fact, and in sound inference from fact, which any belief can produce, stands in the first rank of its claims to be *our* belief. But in saying this two things should be quite clearly kept in mind. One of these is the difference which always maintains itself between a belief and a matter of knowledge. The distinction, as based upon the degrees of evidence, is a vanishing one; but as long as it exists at all from the mind's point of view, it differences the two mental attitudes. From the same distinction it follows that we cannot reasonably expect for our beliefs and faiths the same degree and kind of evidence which we are quite warranted in demanding for our "knowledge-judgments."

But the second of the suggestions which are in place here is quite as important. There are various kinds of facts, to which are applicable the various kinds of evidence. Every belief that arises to consciousness in every individual mind is itself a fact; and beliefs that persistently arise and maintain themselves in a great multitude of minds are very important facts. For example, the belief of *A. B.* that he at the bewitching hour of twelve last night, saw the ghost of his dead friend, is a fact. It needs to be accounted for, either as a dream, a halluci-

nation, or what we — as though all facts were not that— call "an *actual* fact." But no matter of how much importance it may be to *A. B.*, it is not necessarily worth much to the psychologist, as evidence to the trustworthiness of the belief in ghosts. The same thing may be said, though with less confidence, of the testimony of *C. D.* as to the table-tippings which he has witnessed. But when multitudes of men in all times affirm, "for a fact," that they have seen and talked with ghosts; or, better still, so-called "scientists" themselves affirm their observation of the facts of table-tipping and other allied phenomena; we all quite reasonably begin "to sit up and take notice." We feel an obligation to adjust our own beliefs, if we can, to the evidence offered by such an array of *facts of belief*.

The relation of belief to inference is one of the most interesting but complicated of the several psychological problems connected with the entire subject. Its treatment in modern philosophical English may be said to have been opened by Locke's discussion "Of Probability" and "Of the Degrees of Assent," which are the Chapters XV and XVI of the Fourth Book of the "Essay Concerning Human Understand-

ing." His conclusion is that our "Assent" — and by this word he intends to indicate the essential mental attitude in all affairs of belief and faith — "*ought to be regulated by the Grounds of Probability.*" Of these "grounds" he has previously said: "*The grounds of Probability are two; Conformity with our own experience, or the Testimony of others' Experience.*" But in our own experience the prominent fact is just this that we either do believe or do not believe. The statement of Locke, therefore, resolves itself on this point into the very sane conclusion that one of the best ways to establish the reasonableness of any particular belief is derived from the conclusion of a careful reflection on our part over the question: How does this particular fact of belief harmonize with the rest of the facts, — and most especially with the most important, clearly manifest, and practically valuable facts, of this same experience? And here we come down again upon the bed-rock of all the rights and obligations belonging to the activities and the interests of the personal life. We have the right, and we are under the obligation, to seek the highest and most worthy harmony in the development of this life. How far this is from being selfish

we have made quite clear in another connection. ("What Ought I to Do?" p. 270 f.)

Locke displays his customary, sound commonsense when he couples with the experience of the individual, the experience of others as affording legitimate grounds of belief in ourselves. This is so as a matter of course; and it is so in all matters of knowledge as well as in all matters of belief. Most of what we know, or claim to know, is based upon the testimony of others; in notable cases the only evidence which we have, that can be regarded as trustworthy, is the testimony of our fellows that such has actually been their experience. In all matters of knowledge, too, we trust most to the authority of those whom we believe to know best; to those who profess to have themselves experienced the facts, or who have been best equipped for making trustworthy inferences from the facts. There could be no science and no education, if this form of credence, which indeed often enough degenerates into credulity, did not enter into all the accumulations of the world's stock of knowledge. Such a procedure of our minds in their attitudes of faith is, in some respects, most reasonable when we are dealing with matters about which those who

teach us only claim to have probable evidence. If they could, they would not have us take from them their more or less probable beliefs as though these beliefs were already certified knowledge. Indeed, the wisest and most trustworthy authorities in the positive (*sic*) sciences are continually warning us that their most cherished conclusions have — not a few of them — as yet only attained a higher or lower degree of probability. They are still, that is, inferences which may reasonably claim belief, but which cannot demand the allegiance of perfect confidence, as indubitable knowledge. There is no valid reason why these grounds of probability, and the reasons for faith which they lay and support, should not also be trusted in the most complicated experiences of the moral and religious life and the development of personality. Indeed, in certain important respects, morals and religion are the peculiarly appropriate sphere of so-called authority.

At this point our reflections are brought face to face with two very important problems. These concern the relation of argument to belief, or — to use the terms employed by Cardinal Newman — of inference to assent; and the place which "authority" may reason-

ably occupy in recommending or prescribing, not to say dictating, human beliefs. To speak as though faith could really be *enforced* by authority—"single-handed," so to say—would seem to imply a false conception of the real nature of faith.

In considering the first of these two problems, the psychological puzzle is to determine the legitimate, the rational, and really trustworthy relation of inference and assent; of our faiths and the arguments or so-called "proofs" which we advance in their behalf. May belief *reasonably* go beyond the degree of evidence that is available as to the truth of that which is believed? That belief does often, and even habitually, go beyond the evidence, is a patent enough fact of history and of daily experience. But is this reasonable? To the question as put somewhat brusquely in this form, and especially for purposes of the control of conduct through putting the will under obligation to believe, we have no hesitation in giving an affirmative answer. Yes: human beliefs and faiths have other rights than those derived from inference and argument; they do, in fact, place us under obligations for which we can often enough give no answer wholly satis-

factory in the logic-compelling court of the intellect. This would be true, if for no other reason, as inescapably due to the fact that, in general, the most powerful causes of human beliefs and faiths can with difficulty, if at all, be put by the intellect in the form of reasons. There is, however, a better way of rendering this fact of the superiority of many of our faiths, especially those of the higher order, to the proofs for them, quite reasonable. Let us briefly follow this better way.

In arguing about beliefs, and presenting evidence in their behalf or against them, it is customary to pay little or no attention to the fact of the beliefs themselves. But they are *there*, somehow posited in human consciousness, and as facts entitled to speak for themselves as all facts are. Now, argument about the truthfulness of any belief cannot be convincing, even from the point of view of the unprejudiced intellect, without taking the fact of the belief itself into the account. Indeed, the starting-point of the argument "around and about" the fact is, most reasonably, the fact itself. And the conclusion of the argument must be somehow, even if it return a verdict unfavorable to the truthfulness of the belief, such as to show us

how the convincing influence of the belief could come to be so strong as it certainly is.

In the arguments *pro* and *con* the most important and persistent of human beliefs and faiths, this rendering of justice to the fact of their existence is far too often not attempted at all; or if attempted, is very imperfectly done. For example: We have now before the public an enterprising group of young psychologists who are arguing "round and about" the trust which it is "natural" to repose in the deliverances of self-consciousness, and even over the existence of any such mental activities. This they are doing, in pretty total obliviousness of the universal fact of human belief in the trustworthiness of self-consciousness; and of the particular fact that they, as well as the rest of us, are actually trusting it implicitly in their conclusive (*sic*) argument against its trustworthiness. Of all the greater moral and religious faiths, as well as of those metaphysical beliefs which underly the systems of science and philosophy, the same thing is essentially true. We are, perhaps, eternally arguing "round and about" the belief in God; but all the while the belief in some form is *there;* and being there, it is by far the most important

point in all the argument, whether for or against the belief. For the fact of the belief must be made reasonable, whether we can make the content of the belief reasonable, by way of arguing about it, or not.

On the other hand, we cannot properly confound the attitude of mind with which any particular conclusion of a course of inference is received, with the process or activity of inference, by which the conclusion has been reached. I may still doubt about ghosts, or the materialization of departed spirits, while accepting the logical nature of much of the argument about ghosts and spirits, by which others reach the firm faith in their actual existence. They start the argument with faith in the alleged facts, or in those who testify to their having been witnesses to the facts. I admit the cogency of most of the argument, as argument; but I have not yet laid the grasp of faith upon either the alleged facts or the witnesses to these facts. No wonder, then, that we so often hear the bitter complaint, not only in philosophy and theology, but even in science:

> "Myself when young did eagerly frequent
> Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
> About it and about; but evermore
> Came out by the same door wherein I went."

In dismissing for the present these considerations, it is pertinent to remember what has already been said more than once, — namely, that in all belief, as a rule, the reasons for the assent, even where the assent is most unhesitating, cordial, fixed, and unswerving, have been only incompletely recognized. They are, indeed, still causes which lie hidden in the belief itself, rather than reasons which the intellect has discovered and laid bare to itself. No wonder then that our choicest beliefs and faiths so often seem unreasonable, or only scantily clothed in the white raiments of an unimpeachable logical purity; although under this transparent texture we seem to get glimpses of a tightly fitting coat-of-mail, which renders them quite invincible to attacks by way of inference from totally different classes of facts.

It must be frankly confessed as a task impossible at the present time to discuss the reasonableness of having our beliefs and faiths fixed by authority, without giving offence to every advocate of the two extreme and equally untenable positions. It is, however, distinctly obvious that the unreasonable discrediting of authority is the quite too prevalent extreme at the present time. We may be pardoned for

saying, then, that the whole world seems to have gone mad in its protestantism. The grounds for this extremity of protest against "pinning" any kind of faith to any kind of authority are much easier to trace than its reasonableness is to defend. They are largely historical; and to try to follow them in this direction would lead us too far afield from our more simple practical aims and hopes of being helpful. They are also largely on "economic" grounds (if we may be pardoned the somewhat facetious use of this imposing term). It is *cheaper* not to think out the grounds of belief, and so to stick fast in the old beliefs, or else to turn braggartly agnostic, than it is to tax one's intellectual resources in the effort to afford reasons for the will in making its choice among conflicting beliefs. To this we must add the fact, that much of the regnant philosophy, both theoretical and practical, has operated to make the public intellectually lazy in their attitude toward fundamental beliefs. This pseudo-philosophy has made current the opinion that it does not so much matter whether a reality over which our wills have no control is going to verify our beliefs in the final issue, as whether we can skim along on the surface of

life fairly successfully, if we just take them as they seem, at the time, best to serve our temporary ends.

We shall, therefore, limit ourselves to a simple warning against either of the two extremes to which reference was just made. No one can regulate his own mental attitudes wisely and safely, who thinks to escape from the large, and even dominating authority of those who have had most experience, and have given most reflection to this experience, in any realm of human beliefs and faiths. It is distinctly reasonable that it should be so. It is distinctly unreasonable for any individual not to will that in his own case, it shall be so. But on the other hand, no "Self," no being with the reason, moral freedom, and intellectual, moral, and religious equipment for developing a personal life, will unconditionally submit his beliefs and faiths to any human authority.

Another test of the reasonableness of beliefs is the satisfaction they afford to those longings, aspirations, sentiments, and other largely emotional attitudes toward the world and toward the conduct of life, to which we have already referred as entering into the very substance of the personal self. But now we notice how all

the best and noblest of these "feeling-attitudes" arise and develop in connection with certain "value-judgments." We do tend to believe in the reality, — sometime, somewhere, somehow — of that which our higher sentiments and aspirations tell us ought to be real. Here again we must remind ourselves, in a yet more emphatic and conclusive way, that the evidence for the truthfulness of any of the greater beliefs lies forever hidden, or only half-revealed, in the heart of the belief itself.

The ideals which our imaginations and intellects frame so joyously in answer to our sentiments, however often they seem deferred or disappointed by the corresponding realities, are themselves persistent facts. This is especially true of the facts of art, of morality, and of religion. We may say in answer to the question, What should I believe? as we have elsewhere said in answer to the question, What ought I to do? "Although it is a question which does not emerge in consciousness, is no question at all, until we recognize the presence of the ideal, it is not a question that deals with thoughts merely or that cuts itself loose from a firm footing in the real and hard facts of human life." Those feelings and judgments

which attach themselves to human ideals have a right to exercise a potent influence upon human beliefs and faiths. In fact, they do have a mighty influence; it is reasonable that they should have such an influence. This is true, even of the conceptions of the world which are held as the firm beliefs of the positive sciences. For as the Abbé de Broglie has truly said: "The visible world does not contain within itself either the origin, or the end, or the law or the ideal, of human life."

Once more, we may say that the reasonableness of any particular belief or faith is also to be tested by the service it actually renders to the needs of life. Here is the central truth of Pragmatism, with its test of truth by its success in doing "work." But in this tenet as applied to our beliefs and faiths, as when applied to our "knowledge-judgments," we must recognize the fundamental fact that one of the most important of all these needs is the satisfaction which the mind can attain only through confidence in its possession of the truth.

Summing up our conclusions as to the Rights and Obligations of Belief in the form of their most obvious claims to the title of "reasonableness," we may say that the chief tests are the

following: The correspondence of belief to the knowledge derived from our own experience or the experience of others, — especially of "the men who know"; the satisfaction afforded to the sentiments and value-judgments which attach themselves to the ideals of art, morality and religion; and the assistance rendered to us in the conduct of the practical life. In a word, the relation which any particular belief sustains to the supreme interests and highest values of personal life, must settle, as far as such a problem can be settled, the question, What should I believe?

Be "reasonable" in your beliefs does not mean, then, "Prove them all by argument in the steps of which no possible flaw can be discerned," except, possibly (and very likely) that the argument has neglected the very most important facts from which it starts — the facts of belief themselves; but it means the rather, "Choose your beliefs, according to their harmonies with your total experience and with the experiences of the wise of the race; and according to the reasonable satisfaction they afford to your own best Self and to the needs for the safe-conducting of the practical life."

Each one of these three supreme groups of the tests by which to determine the rights and the obligations of one's beliefs and faiths, seems, however, to require some further amplification and defence.

CHAPTER V

COMFORTS AND REWARDS OF RIGHT BELIEF

THOSE attitudes of mind, whether toward things, truths, or persons, which we ordinarily describe by such words as "confidence," "reliance," "belief," or "faith," are in general characterized by a peculiar feeling of comfort. This feeling is closely allied to that which accompanies a state of bodily repose. Indeed, we use the same words to describe the two; and, in experience, they are not infrequently so blended as to be almost indistinguishably one. We covet mental reliance on the chair or bed in which we repose; somewhat as we repose our faith in the friend of whom we know that he will stand back of us, or support us, in some business or other enterprise. One must have confidence in one's tools, if one is to work with them in quiet assurance of success; just as one must put a large faith in one's fellows, if one is to live in comfortable social relations with them.

In scientific discovery, and even more in the teaching of science, and applying its results to ends of practical good, belief in its experimental means of testing the truth, and a generous faith in its accepted principles, are indispensable. Above all, must one rely on the deliverances of moral consciousness, if one is to have any sort of satisfaction in one's choices or courses of conduct; while, in religion, faith is so essential to its comforts and rewards as to be considered the central factor in its very conception. Faith *is* religion, subjectively considered.

The very comfortable nature of all these attitudes of mind and body is further indicated by the prepositions with which the words expressive of the attitudes themselves have come to be connected. We rely "on" the thing or person, "toward" which, or whom, this outlook of right belief is directed. We have confidence "in" the word of promise uttered by our friend; as we believe "in" the enterprise which he recommends to us, — or, more especially, the good cause which has enlisted the enthusiastic efforts of both of us for its speedier realization. The army that does not trust its leaders is not at ease when resting in camp; much less can it enter battle with the comforting feeling

that it is going to be led to victory. The New Testament employs all three of the prepositions which we have just been using to describe the Christian's attitude of mind toward Christ. This attitude is faith "toward" (εἰς) him; it is faith "upon" (ἐπί) him; it is faith "in" (ἐν) him. It is comforting feeling of trust, going out *toward* its object, reposing *upon* its object, and finding *in* this object an inspiring and vitalizing atmosphere.

But the seductions and dangers of this mental attitude of comfortable repose are also notably comparable to those which invest the corresponding physical condition. The comforts of repose, whether of body or mind, are quite too apt to make difficult the exchange for them of the painstaking activities which they should excite and inspire. For doubt, distrust, and weakness of belief, are essentially uncomfortable states, whether the object to which these states have reference be physical or mental. They have the ferment of restlessness, such as belongs to all unsupported physical and psychical conditions. Hence there occurs a lack of balance, or even a condition of contrast and warfare between the comforts of wrong belief and the rewards of right belief. The belief of the

man of science in some particular hypothesis, or means of attaining a valuable practical result, may be a hindrance to its own realization (or rectification) if it does not keep him stimulated in the effort to work diligently at the testing of the belief. The more we trust things and persons that are not worthy of trust, the worse is our awakening from the comfortable slumber with its alluring dreams, when the inevitable hour of awakening has actually come. In morals, it is quite regularly more profitable to inquire often into the grounds of one's opinions on matters of right and wrong, than to be always reposing undisturbed in the pleasing assurances of an invulnerable self-righteousness. In religion, it is the unavoidable experience of the inquiring mind, that its prayer must be: "Lord! I do believe" (some things, with some degree of assent): "help thou my unbelief" (about other things, and to a fuller and more intelligent assent). And when the faith comes in answer to the prayer of painful doubt or momentary unbelief, it must be in the form of a faith that inspires and proves itself in works.

But there is nothing supremely strange, or even foreign to all our other experiences, in this high price at which are sold to men the

comforts and the rewards of right belief. It is the case of "spur and bridle," by intermitting or concurring use of which the spirit of man is driven and guided, if he is to realize the destiny of being a person in any commendable degree. On the one hand, we have to appreciate the worth of the allurements of the beliefs, that at the best are partially *wrong;* on the other hand, we have to confess the need of the birth-pains of doubt, and of the trials of faith, until we come somehow to distinguish what is *right* belief. Whichever of the two experiences outweighs the other — the discomforts of doubt and uncertainty by the way, and of disappointment at the end, or the comforts of the partially right belief as it grows in the process of testing, to the fruition of a mature and reasonable faith — if our measure be one of quantity alone, we cannot deny that the quality of the product which can be attained only in this way, the personal life conducted under the guidance of the will that grasps and holds on to the more reasonable of the greater faiths, renders the process well worth all that it costs. Faiths must be refined by fire, before they are made enduring substance of the Self.

We are not, however, sacrificing regard for

the sacredness of truth to cravings for temporary feelings of a comfortable sort, when we justify Nature (or Providence) in using so large a measure of delusion in the cultivation of human beliefs and faiths. For there are two most important and fundamental considerations which should determine our opinions and our practice at this point. One of these considerations is this: The absolute need of faith in something that reaches beyond the present experience, and indeed, is not quite warranted by it, if there is to be any worthy development of personal life. Belief must have a certain audacity to accomplish such a development. The other is the fact, that all these greater beliefs have the truths which correspond to them only gradually and partially revealed. This partial and temporary character of the satisfactions of belief belongs to the very nature of belief. If we demanded for the hypotheses, or beliefs, of the positive sciences, all absence of the partially true, of the defective, of that which so often in the end is supplanted by something far better than the form earlier taken by the belief, we should never have any science at all. If we set aside, in the efforts to perfect human society, all the beliefs of men

in one another, and in their varying schemes of organization, and in the formulas and rules and practices adopted for the carry-out of these schemes, because they so universally turn out largely deceptive and disappointing, society of any sort would be impossible of development.

This necessity for partially right belief, with all its illusory character, is absolute in morals and religion. As said Schiller: "Man is robbed of all worth, when he no longer believes in the three words" (God, freedom, and immortality). As a more recent writer has declared: "Religious faith is a postulate of the practical reason. Man *must* believe, in order to retain his worth as man — a worth which no noble-spirited man ought to renounce." But this necessity does not guarantee every stage and item of even the wisest mortal's most confident faith. For, as Professor Royce has finely said: "Applied philosophy is like practical religion. It illumines life, but it gives no power to use the arts of the medicine-man. . . . Religious faith involves no direct access to the counsels of God; but it inspires the believer with the assurance that all things work together for good, and endows him with readiness to serve in his station the God who is All in all." In his "Ora-

tion on Wieland," Goethe praises the power to counteract the pessimism arising from the facts respecting the condition of the State, of morals and of religion, by cheerfulness born of faith, which was possessed in so high a degree by Lord Shaftesbury as well as by Wieland. In all such matters, faith must allure the mind to imagine conditions and results that are contradicted by many of the facts of present experience.

To enforce the comforts and rewards of right belief we might turn again, as so often, to the master among the ancients of the Stoical philosophy as applied to the life of conduct. We should find the thought at the centre of all his reflective thinking. According to Epictetus, the attitude of the human will toward the Divine Will, which is characterized by perfect confidence, is the only one that can support a reasonable, a comfortable and successful life. Perfect faith in God is the indispensable condition of such a life. But this attitude must be maintained in spite of the trials of faith, and indeed, in the scorn of them. The contradictions and disappointments of such a faith belong to the world of the illusory and the seeming; the faith itself is the reality and the guaranty of all other reality. To this belief the conduct

of the mind should be implicity entrusted; just as one entrusts one's body to the physician, or one's property interests to one's lawyer. For without it "the soul is like a vase filled with water; while the semblances of things fall like rays upon its surface. If the water is moved, the ray will seem to be moved likewise, though it is in reality without motion." But such a faithful will must govern conduct; for, "It is scandalous that he who sweetens his drink by the gift of the bees, should by vice embitter reason, the gift of the gods."

It is, of course, in the realms of morals and religion that the comforts and rewards of right belief are, as a rule, most eagerly sought and most conspicuously present or absent. But their presence and influence as connected with the beliefs that enter so largely into the nature and progress of scientific systems and of social and political institutions are just as truly beyond all doubt. Something of a more special sort in describing and defining the nature and limitations of these applications of the greater beliefs, during the unceasing effort of the individual and of the race to render them increasingly reasonable, is demanded by the most brief answer to the question, What should I believe?

In general, then, it seems that the utility and value of human beliefs and faiths consist largely in their exploratory, tentative, and experimental character. For man does not learn to know, or conquer for his service, the world of things, by strictly logical inferences derived from a background or a foundation of indubitable *a priori* principles. He learns what things are by a series of approaches, in which the direction and the degrees of his belief in them come nearer and nearer to the truth of reality. He guesses at what they are, and what they will probably do to him and for him, and puts more or less of confidence in the accuracy of his guesses. He, thereupon, pins a kind of faith to these guesses. He extends and corrects the guesses, the crude, preliminary beliefs, by putting them to the test of experience. By using the suggestions which this testing affords (in which failure is often quite as helpful as success) he gets somewhat nearer to the goal of a perfectly valid confidence, a belief that is thoroughly right, although it may never attain the certainty ascribed to the conclusion of a perfectly constructed syllogism. It is, indeed, not on the basis of strictly logical inference that the temple of knowledge is chiefly erected, even in

the physical sciences. The steps of these sciences are, the rather, like the rungs of a ladder of suggestions as to the truths of fact and truths of principle, by trusting which a climb is made *toward* the heavens of truth in its perfection and purity; and the foot of the ladder is itself placed on ground shifting at times between doubt and faith, but on the whole commending itself more and more to the confidence of the mind that has staked all on the success of its climbing.

In the last analysis, therefore, to plead the rewards of the will to believe, what to the reason it seems at the time is nearest that which it is right to believe, is a superfluous task. Such a plea is really equivalent to saying that, since we *must* discover the nature of things by progress in the skill of reckoning probabilities, and *must* govern our intercourse with things and uses of things by the same kind of skill, it is *best* for us to do so. It is always "best" to do what one positively "must" do. And whether we like it or not, we are doomed (or privileged?) to live largely by right belief in all our dealings — whether for purposes of scientific progress or of practical benefit — with the physical environment from

which, except by death, there is no possible escape.

The indispensable necessity and high value of human beliefs and faiths in their office as "working hypotheses," is yet more evident in matters political and social; but above all, in matters moral and religious. All political and social progress is made only by a series of attempts, in which men for the time believe as the best thing possible for the time, or to which they attach their faith in a passionate and devoted way, as though the form attempted were the only and veritable realization of the coveted ideal. How fragmentary and faulty these beliefs are, and how surely the most carefully constructed of them — the political and social beliefs of the wisest minds and the most fortunate times — are doomed to partial failure, needs no specially selected illustrations to prove it true. All social and political schemes and actual constitutions prove the fact, and the necessity of the fact, that progress can be gained only by putting them to the test, to determine their claims to approach the right beliefs and faiths. But choices of this sort, made by the "will to believe," are an indispensable expression of the "will to live" in association with one's

kind. If the attempts at right belief carried with them no conviction, they could do no work. If they were not put to the test, to the trial of their faith, there could be no development. For men do not live together, with common success and in righteousness and harmony, because they have taken lessons from experts in a deductive science of sociology, "societology," or political economy. They find out the way to live with a measurable success in the attainment of the rewards of right living, in community relations, by an unending series of "trying it on." The only way, for example, that the vagaries and inconsistencies and lurking perils of the communistic schemes which are arousing the enthusiastic confidences of so large a portion of the race, and which are calling forth so much of noble, if half-blind, faith, can be made to give way to more of right belief, will doubtless be only through a process of "trying the schemes out." The trial will inevitably be fraught with much disappointment and suffering.

Above all, however, if a man is going to live the life of morality and religion, must he cling, often times almost desperately and in spite of

many indubitable facts, to certain beliefs which have their present rewards largely in what they do to answer the demand for satisfaction of the higher sentiments and profounder needs of the personal life. To these faiths, there come many severe trials when they are tested by the actual happenings of the daily experiences of the individual, or the wider but more superficial survey of the courses of human history. The man who is going to lead the life made reasonable by the faiths of morality, needs to hold firm the conviction that wrong-doing, whether by himself or others is due to be thwarted and punished; that to those who do their duty according to their light and opportunities, all will essentially and ultimately be well. Especially does he crave that most comforting and glorious of all moral beliefs, — the faith in the ultimate triumph of righteousness, and in the blessedness which is the fit companion of righteousness. But he may be unable to derive this faith, with the rigidity of the Kantian dialectic, from the very nature of the Practical Reason. And he will quite surely be called to face an immense number of experiences in which all these comforting beliefs seem to be contradicted by the facts.

So, too, for the man who would lead the life demanded by the faiths of religion, there is constantly sore need of the comfort and support which these faiths furnish in sufficient measure, and in a reasonable manner, only when they attach themselves to ideals that are high up and far away. But only the act of believing itself can draw the ideals down and make them nestle in the heart to keep it warm and make it strong. Such is the belief in the sanity and friendliness of the Universe, — otherwise stated, in the wisdom and goodness of God. This faith is closely allied to that in the moral issues of life, as lived under the dominance of this Universe. But how awfully do the facts of life shock this faith! How ruthlessly do so many of our experiences flaunt themselves in its face! "The mills of the gods grind slowly," said that ancient people who, with the exception of the ancient Hebrews, of all peoples, ancient or modern, left on record the choicest fruits of profound reflection on moral issues. But only faith in a God, who is perfect Ethical Spirit, supports the practical conviction that the mills will grind on until they grind "exceeding small." That they will, however, is not the cherished conviction of the pious alone, whose

lives bear witness to the sincerity and depth of their faith; it is also the suspicion of many another who has followed "variant by-paths" with an "uncertain heart," but whose poetical insight or quiet reflective thinking has compelled him at times to take refuge in the comforts of this faith. So deeply planted is this conviction in the very substance of the Self.

If the rightness of our moral and religious beliefs must be held in hypothetical form at first, and then purified and made more reasonable by long and painful processes of testing; in what respect, pray! do they essentially differ from all the most important and reasonable of our greater beliefs? We trust them; we conduct our lives in reliance on their truth. But we admit that they must stand the testing of doubt, the discipline of experience, in order to merit and receive their highest, permanent rewards. What would you? This is only to say that right belief, like all other good things, must be proved right by a series of experiments. We may even say, without irrationality or caprice, that it is *made* right only by approaches along the thorny path of painful experiences. Such an admission, however, is no valid reason for denying oneself its comforts and

its rewards by the way. This is not to say that one should shape one's beliefs and faiths, in things scientific, social, moral or religious, solely by the comfort one can get out of them; but that the comfort which right beliefs do actually afford to the soul in its approaches to them by the actual process of "trying them on," is an item of no small moment in their favor, in spite of the pains of the trial, and the disappointments, that are unavoidable in this process.

Let it not seem invidious if we turn our argument around a little way, in order to glance an instant at the dark side of life, when in its shadows through loss of faith in the greater truths of morality and religion. We need not mention names, as was done not long ago in an article giving a critical estimate of the literary work of a group of English writers whose lives had been a sad commentary on their seeming complete failure in the will to believe the greater truths essential to the unfolding of the higher personal life. Of these, some had "mingled their religion with the fumes of alcohol and opium"; some had died victims of absinthe and some of suicide. "And, above all, there is the hideous tragedy in Reading Jail." But

one of the most gifted puts his final estimate of the values of the faith he had rejected, into verses celebrating the choice of the nuns who, with its comforts and supports, had devoted themselves to the active service of humanity.

> "And there they rest; they have serene insight
> Of the illumining dawn to be.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Surely their choice of vigil is the best?
> Yea! for our roses fade, the world is wild;
> But there, beside the altar, there is rest."

A curious and interesting tribute this to the comfortable repose of soul afforded by the faiths of morality and religion!

CHAPTER VI

BELIEFS, SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIAL

THAT belief and knowledge are inextricably mingled and dependently related in all mental development, both that of the individual and that of the race, is a thesis which by this time should need no further evidence advanced in its support. The fact has been made abundantly clear by our attempts to answer, if only in a partial way, the two practically important questions: "What can I Know?" and, "What should I Believe?" Without belief, no knowledge is possible; without growth in knowledge, none of our beliefs, not even the most imperative and practically most important, can stand the test of the experience which requires them to vindicate their claims to acceptance by continual approaches toward a higher standard of reasonableness.

A further argument in the direction of the same conclusion has been conducted in several

of the previous chapters of this treatise on the nature, rights and obligations of human beliefs and faiths. Some of these beliefs are essential elements in all the workings of the human mind. They must be held, in order to perceive and think at all; whether the object of perception or of thought be something, or oneself, or some other person; and whether they be held consciously and intelligently, or lay a sort of slavish grip upon an intellect that is blind to their existence. Such beliefs we have referred to, though only briefly and without much attempt at their psychological analysis or even their enumeration, under the head of so-called necessary "intellectual beliefs," "primary intuitions," "first principles of the intellect," or similar terms. Other beliefs — especially those of the social, moral, or religious order, seem to present themselves in the guise of suppliants, rather than dictators before the will to believe. They solicit more or less conscious and definitive choices, with the apparent end in view of being the individual's preferred forms of faith, needed for the right conduct of life. But they, too, in some sort, belong to the very substance of the Self; to the constitution and the indispensable conditions of the development

of the personal life. For knowledge, even in its most scientific form, cannot free itself from the influences that have important and intimate connections with the faiths which underlie and control the social, moral and religious life of man. So much a unity, in spite of, or rather because of, the great diversity of its capacities and needs, is the human soul. It is now from this more lofty — perhaps we may not improperly call it "airy" — point of view, that we propose to survey certain scientific beliefs.

In conducting the survey just proposed, we are at once impressed with the truth that all the most precise knowledge of the sciences has developed from a soil rich in superstitions and unproved or disproved beliefs. The explanation of this historical fact is partly due to the psychological fact, that intellectual curiosity, or natural wonder, is the common root of both. It has been said that "Wonder is faith's dearest child" (*Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind*). The opposite is the rather true. Belief is the child of wonder, or intellectual curiosity. But so is knowledge, as well. For the emotional and practical aspect of the mind toward the operations and uses of things satisfies itself at first by some form of belief. This is the earliest

stage of half-blind progress toward the beginnings of science. Man tries at first to allay the fears and strengthen the hopes, which arise from his superstitious attitude toward physical things and natural forces, by the aid of incantations and charms. He has full confidence in the reality of the beings which he employs for such purposes; because the very constitution of his mind compels him to explain the facts made known through the senses by invisible agencies, the existence of which he must always take largely on a species of intellectual belief. He will bewitch nature; for is not nature herself a very shrewd and cunning old witch? In all this, practical interests of great moment are served in important ways by the imagination and the intellect co-operating to construct suitable objects of belief. As says Professor Jastrow, in his "Religion of Babylonia and Assyria" (p. 356): "The chief motive in the development of astronomy in the Euphrates Valley was the belief that the movements of the heavenly bodies portended something that was important for men to know." Of medicine also the same authority says: "There is indeed no branch of human knowledge which so persistently retains its connec-

tion with religious beliefs among all peoples of antiquity as the one which today is regarded as resting upon a materialistic basis."

But the process is not different when man slowly or, in certain instances more promptly, passes from what science is pleased to call superstition to those beliefs which science adopts for its own name's sake. The same mind, not finding either emotional or practical satisfactions in the superstitious interpretation of natural phenomena, as they appear to sense, or in the manipulation of its mysteries by augury and incantation, devises other explanations of the facts of sensuous knowledge. These, too, involve belief in forces and beings of which the senses can, still as before, take no direct account. With a chastened and more rational faith in nature as true to herself in each detail of fact, according to the causal principle and in conformity to law, modern experimental science is made possible; and it sets out on a career of rapid and vigorous growth. But while it feels out its way with the left hand of experiment, it leans as heavily as ever with its right hand on the staff of faith.

We cannot, then, agree with those writers who claim that superstitious beliefs, especially

of the religious order, have always and everywhere acted as obstacles in the path of scientific advance. It is perhaps rather nearer the truth to say of scientific beliefs, as one author says of religious faiths (Castrén in his *Finnische Mythologie*) that even the superstitious beliefs of Shamanism have had a marked beneficial effect upon the human mind in freeing it from the "shackles of blind natural forces," and in "recognizing man's dependence for his weal and woe upon a purposive, objective Will." What science needs, then, is not to dispense with belief, because it is so often some remnant of an ancient and mistaken superstition; but to render by a process of continuous testing its own and cognate beliefs, more and more reasonable.

It is not our purpose, indeed, to indulge ourselves much in metaphysical discussions, — so very practical is the nature of our endeavor to throw a ray or two of light on the answer to the question, What should I believe? There is one thought, however, which has high philosophical value and may help to a better understanding of our present contention, if it is quoted at some length from another work. The quotation will recall and reinforce certain con-

clusions which have been less technically expressed and illustrated in several of the previous chapters of this smaller book.

"The distinction ordinarily made between so-called knowledge and so-called faith is an unstable and vanishing distinction. Belief that rests upon no grounds of knowledge, if such belief is possible even for beings of the lowest intellectual order, certainly is to be rejected by the philosophy of religion, as without evidential value. On the other hand, knowledge that does not involve large elements of belief — and often elements of belief which are varied in character, subtle in origin, and extremely difficult to estimate with regard to their evidential value — is not to be had by human minds, whether in the form of religion, or science, or philosophy. The reasons why the term faith, rather than the term knowledge, is appropriate with reference to the verities of religion in general, and especially when treating of man's conception of God, have already been made sufficiently clear.

"By combining the preceding conclusions we arrive at the following position: In matters theoretical as well as practical, our attitudes of mind, both those which we are pleased to call

knowledge and those which are often depreciated as only faith, can claim only a higher or lower degree of *probability* with regard to the real existence of their objects. We do not increase the ontological value of any judgment by bringing it under the category of knowledge; we do not necessarily diminish the ontological value of any judgment by being content to let it rest under the rubric faith. Some men's knowledges are by no means so rational as other men's beliefs. And much of the development of the particular sciences, as well as of the evolution of religious faith, consists in finding out that what was once thought to be assuredly known, is no longer worthy even of belief; but that many of the insights of faith have turned out to be anticipations of future assured knowledge, whether of law or of fact ("Philosophy of Religion," vol. II, p. 22f.).

In dealing with the beliefs that make science possible and that condition all its development, because they belong to the very nature of the human mind, we must emphasize anew a certain group which may be claimed to exist always and everywhere, and to act with ever-increasing authority. These constitute the faith of science in reason itself; or

rather that confidence of reason in itself which underlies and guarantees all our mental attitudes toward the real world — of things, and Self, and other selves, — whether we classify these attitudes as of faith or as of knowledge. This "Reason" that has undying faith in itself is not simply the fact of sense-perception, with its powers of interpretation so vastly superior to those of any of the animals; nor is it simply the facility and accuracy of the intellectual processes which, from facts of sense, infer conclusions, derive laws, and soar aloft on wings of speculation to the thin air of universally valid scientific hypotheses. The Reason of which we are speaking is possessed of certain powers of insight; it makes quite imperative demands for the satisfaction of certain sentiments and ideals of æsthetical, moral and religious, as well as of more purely intellectual kind. These demands are essential elements of this Reason itself. And being essential, they guarantee a certain persistency and authority to the faiths which correspond to the demands. The completely and candidly rational mind, therefore, is no more satisfied with a body of science which does not satisfy these faiths than it is with a body

of science which does not explain the facts of sensuous experience. Such a mind demands that the World of non-sensuous ideals shall be brought into harmony with the world of sensuous facts. Only when this harmony is attained, does Reason feel satisfied with itself.

That men still cherish, and always have cherished, a vast number of mistaken and even morally injurious as well as practically harmful beliefs and faiths, is undoubtedly true. But perhaps it is no more true of art, morality, and religion, than it is of what we are pleased to call the positive sciences. The proper conclusion from these sad facts is neither the discrediting of human reason altogether, nor of that side of its demands and endeavors which has its grounds in what we call our beliefs. We hear great laudation of facts as the foundation of science, and of the "practical," as the principal, if not the only field, for experiencing its valuable results. But the language of the facts which science — whether physical, psychological, or social — sets out to interpret is, as Conrad somewhere declares, "so often more enigmatic than the craftiest arrangement of words." It is not the pathway along which the beliefs and faiths of humanity have crept, —

so cautiously, and sometimes so sneakingly, — that is the only course of man's evolution to be thickly strewn with cast-off superstitions and false ideas. The path of the positive sciences is much decorated in the same way. Both resemble the uphill road that leads from Nikko to Chuzenji, with its sacred mountain hard to climb. Scarcely a yard of this road that has not lying on top, or covered by its dust, one or two pairs of sandals dropped from the weary feet of its stream of pilgrims.

And yet the courage and assurance of men grows, both as respects the reach and the verity of their scientific attainments, and also as respects the reasonableness and practical value of their beliefs and faiths. In no previous age of the world, in spite of its seeming prevalence of agnosticism and unbelief, have the convictions of men as to the trustworthiness of human reason — wisely and modestly employed, in the long run, and for the great average — been so firm and unassailable.

Now, that the faith of reason in itself should be quite unlimited and always proved true by its result, in order to afford a rational justification for this faith, is plainly absurd. It amounts to saying that man, in order to be

rational at all, must be like God, in the possession of a reason that is incapable of making mistakes. It is enough for man to learn by his mistakes; to have a reason that can grow into an increased similitude with the perfect Reason, whose child he may have the reasonable belief that he is. But the notable thing in this connection is the fact that the mistakes and errors do not dismay or essentially lessen the confidences of mankind in their ability progressively to attain valid knowledge and reasonable belief. In this confidence the positive sciences have a particularly generous share. They are fully entitled to the enjoyment of this share. For without that confidence they could less easily exist than could either art, or morals, or religion. For scientific beliefs are bound to be more "cold-blooded," so to say. They make more show of deference to facts and of indifference to sentiments and to ideals, than do the faiths of art, morals, and religion. We suspect that this is largely "*show*"; and that the sciences are just as sincerely, if less obviously, subject to control in the shaping of their conclusions, from æsthetical, and even *quasi*-moral and *quasi*-religious sentiments. We may say, however, that the

scientific belief in human capacity for attaining the correct picture of the World as it really is, lays a more conscious emphasis on the accuracy of "controlled" sense-perception, of mathematical processes, of measurements of quantity, and of strictly guarded intellectual processes of inference.

All the greater beliefs of humanity are only certain aspects of the faith of Reason in itself; and to some good degree, they must all be held by the rankest agnostic and most pronounced unbeliever among the professional "scientists." Metaphysics or no metaphysics, as an affair of academical culture, or as a subject to which it is worth the while of any reader of books or owner of a "silent hour," to give a moment's attention; a certain "metaphysical faith" underlies and guarantees all the confidence of the so-called positive sciences in their progressive approaches to the truths of reality. One would suppose that this belief, like all other beliefs, might properly be called upon to render an intelligent account of its reasonableness by every one who cherishes it. Why, indeed, should not science be compelled to vindicate its metaphysical beliefs, as often and as loudly as are morality and religion?

Now, it is the same human spirit in which reside and develop the greater beliefs of science, and the higher flights of artistic imagination, as well as all the more fundamental and valuable faiths of morality and religion. This spirit, although often distracted and sometimes quite distraught, always remains essentially one and indivisible, and so persistently engaged in attempts to secure for itself a higher degree of reasonableness as the sole condition of a completer self-harmony. From this psychological fact it inevitably follows that, both in theory and in practice, no conception of the "Substrate of material things" can be formed in the name of the positive sciences, which does not include numerous important elements from the æsthetical, and even from the moral, side of human nature. Shall we find in "Matter" this needed all-sufficient substrate? Well, then, we must, as we are assured by one of the most ardent advocates of this solution of the mystery of the Universe, endow "*It*" with "active life" as its "inseparable attribute." We must think of it as "infinitely delicate" and capable of "the highest evolution of thought." To this world-builder we should sing some such perpetual song of praise as this:

"Is not this which ye call 'Matter',
Of the world, the elemental force;
From which the life and being of Whatever
Strives upward toward light and motion,
Takes its source?"

Curiously enough we find an ancient mystical writing of Christian Gnosticism asserting of "all angels, all archangels, gods and lords, all rulers, all the great invisibles," that "ye are all, of yourselves and in yourselves in turn, from one mass, and one matter and one substance. Ye are all from the same mixture." Extremes meet; and this is not the only instance where we come upon an explanation of the physical world by the theory of a non-spiritual and impersonal substance, which differs in its essential metaphysics, in no important way, from the most extravagant vagaries of religious Gnosticism.

The same truth is even more apparent when we analyze the attempts of science to construct a self-explanatory but non-spiritual conception of the world of things and men under the term Nature, or some similar term. This Nature must be "uncreate, perfect, and eternal"; it must have that within itself which

"Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent."

On this attempt, and on the objection to the spiritual conception of the world as a necessary postulate of all science, when it endeavors to make its ultimate beliefs reasonable, I have elsewhere said: "And, indeed, the preceding centuries of talk about a *regressus* as the way in which the plain man's consciousness, or the observations of science, or the speculation of philosophy, reaches from the natural system of things to the spirit that is in them, is in violation both of fact and of sound reason as well. There is not, and there never has been, any 'brute, inanimate' matter; there is not now, and there never has been, any system of natural objects bare or devoid of indwelling spirit. Matter, considered as wholly devoid of the characteristics of selfhood, is, as yet, not matter; it is nothing, and can do nothing; it is nought; it is not. And when we supplant this lower conception by the more vital, effective, and universal term Nature, we only acknowledge in a not less impressive way the same essential truth. This term, indeed, serves the great purpose better than does the term matter; it is a richer and more satisfactory grouping of the necessary conceptions, because it is the more obvious and richly

personal and spiritual term. To get *from* Nature *to* Spirit, then, we have only to get *more deeply into* Nature. For whenever mythology, or science, or philosophy, makes due recognition of the extent and potency of this Absolute Whole, as an explaining principle for what is otherwise particular and isolated, it only expresses the universal insight of man's mind into the real character of the world of things and of spirits. *Except so far as it is known as having additional characteristics of Spirit, Nature is as 'brute and inanimate' as was the old-fashioned but now extinct conception of matter.* In a word, Nature, too, is nothing, and can do nothing, without Spirit; and only in so far as it is essentially spiritual, can it be known as the principle which sums-up and embraces all particular realities and all actual events." ("A Theory of Reality," p. 460.)

But our argument in behalf of the influence of æsthetical and even of ethical considerations upon the greater scientific beliefs does not need to depend solely upon the psychological principle that the mind of man is a spiritual unity. The argument may be confirmed by an appeal to the facts of history and to the present tenor, as well as to the past trend, of scientific concep-

tions and theories. One of the most prominent and practically useful of the prevailing scientific beliefs is the faith in the World as a Cosmos or rational order. This belief is not, indeed, primitive and fundamental to the same extent as the one which has just been passed under examination. But it is by no means wholly absent from the crudest and earliest forms of science. Indeed, when the positive sciences had not reached the experimental stage, — had not, that is to say, as yet become "positive sciences," — the tendency of reflective minds was to construct *a priori* far too fair and complete, and æsthetically pleasing, a picture of the physical universe. Inasmuch as there was then little or no question raised concerning the part which the gods had in its building, and in the conduct of its daily operations, there was as little doubt that ethical considerations had entered into the original construction of the universe, and were still potent in its daily ongoings. Plato, who is in general so critical and so sane, when discoursing about matters of human political and social morality, goes quite wild when he attempts to tell us how the Divine Being must have proceeded in his construction of the World.

In spite, however, of these and all similar defects and exaggerations, the belief in the essential orderliness and law-abiding quality of the material universe, has become an established thing in modern science. The conviction that it is so, has been fortified by all the more important advances of scientific investigation. So true is this, that the belief is a sort of "sleeping" or silent hypothesis, lying at the base of all the methods of experimental research. This is not at all the same thing as the vain and illusory attempt to reduce all the sciences to one all-inclusive and all-dominating science. There are many sciences, each with its legitimate, although more or less over-lapping, sphere of phenomena allotted to it. For the various manifestations of the one world are as different and changeable as its unity in variety is comprehensive and unyielding. This, on the other hand, is far from giving any warrant to the theory of a "pluralistic universe," but just the contrary. The many sciences are more and more discovering their own manifold alliances and the community of co-operation necessary to understand better the wonderful variety in unity of this One Universe.

If, then, we ask ourselves, Out of what undying roots does this belief in the motley crowd of things and array of conflicting forces, perpetually snarling at each other, or entering into deadly conflict with one another, and yet all the while evolving a world of higher and nobler forms of life, a world whose elemental forces "strive ever upward toward light and motion"; — if, now, I say, we ask ourselves, How does such a world come to be regarded as a true and grand "Cosmos"? we cannot answer the question, just as a question of fact, and regardless of any attempt to justify the fact, without taking chiefly into our account the æsthetical nature of the human mind. We must say that the artistic spirit works powerfully in man, in every normal man, whether he be a mathematician, or not; and whether he be a physicist, or a chemist, or neither of the two. Under the influence of this spirit, the uncivilized man shapes his pottery, carves his canoe, and decorates his clothing, in forms approved by the highest art, both ancient Greek and modern Japanese. He does this in the belief that reality is beautiful.

When we say that the World is *beautiful*, we do not mean that there are no ugly things

in it, or that it always, or indeed ever, makes upon us the impression, when taken as a whole, of being a quite thoroughly pretty affair. But we mean that the higher qualities of the Beautiful, the qualities of sublimity, of vastness of space and time and power, of orderliness and a sort of grand harmony emphasized even by the horrid discords which sometimes shock our ears, rule in the constitution of the World and are somehow being more perfectly realized in the World's evolution.

This æsthetical belief of the scientific order is one of several marked instances of the general principle to which attention has already been called. For the time being, and in many of their aspects, the world of sense and the world of belief present not a few contrasts and even apparent contradictions; and yet they are not two real worlds, but only one real world viewed from two different points of view. If we were to enter, for purposes of illustration or proof, into details, we should have to note the dependence of the special form of the beliefs that help to shape the scientific conceptions of the invisible world upon the prevailing stage of scientific knowledge as to the world of sense.

The two are never the same. The invisible world is never the exact replica of the world of sense, — whether it be the invisible world of science, or of art, or of religion. For it is essentially true of science as it is of art or of religion, as has been so finely said: "A beautiful material thing is produced by our participation in reason issuing from the Divine." But the degree and manner of this participation is, in science as in art and religion, dependent on the environment of the world of sense. In this environment, and under its influence, science and art and religion interact and co-operate, to construct an ever more reasonable picture, for faith to grasp and appropriate, of the invisible and yet truly real world. The curve of the evolution of civilization is, as Crozier in his "History of Intellectual Development" has said, "the product and the outcome, not of any one or more or even all of these factors when taken *separately*, but of the interplay of them all *when united and combined as parts of a single great organic movement.*" And among other instances, he refers to the "way in which newborn Physical Science affected Theology, that in turn Politics, and that again Morality, and so on." (vol. III, p. 9).

Why then shall I not hold that this spiritual view of the world, so persistently contrasted with, and so often opposed to, the sensuous view of the same world, is entitled to some of the respect given to what we call "science?" It is with the assurance of faith in this view that the Duke of Argyll declared ("Philosophy of Belief," p. 186): "There *must be* (italics ours) some spiritual and ethical relations corresponding to the ethical and spiritual faculties of which we are conscious in ourselves." As a product of belief, a kind of intuitive experience, this spiritual view belongs to the realm of empirical knowledge; as a product of reflection, it is a form of rational knowledge. The development of the positive sciences themselves is continually adding to the proofs that the vast and, at first, seemingly heterogeneous multitude of things, is in reality a unity, being perpetually constructed and re-constructed according to ideals which excite the mind to sentiments of beauty for the sublimity, orderliness, and wisdom which they display. Thus the world which satisfies man's æsthetical nature and the world which he discovers by use of his senses, and by inference from such discovery, — the world believed in, although

invisible and intangible, and the world actually visible and tangible, are known as *One real World.*

Closely allied with this form of scientific belief, the origin of which we may assign chiefly to man's æsthetical nature, is the vague, and not as yet well-established but hopeful belief, that the physical universe admits of interpretation in accordance with man's moral and religious as well as intellectual ideals. The older forms of so-called "natural theology" attempted a conclusive proof by way of induction, if not a demonstration, that the world is a "moral system." As a result of the survey of things, then, one was invited to climb by steps of inference to the conclusion that the same world which the positive sciences know is the world of a wise and benevolent God. In this way the intellect, on a basis of sense-perception, was to give genuine scientific value to the faiths of religion. This so-called "argument from design" was attacked by Kant, but with due deference to its respectability, on the terms of his distinction between knowledge and faith, and his principle of confining the claims of the former to the causal connection of phenomena only. The blow at

the scientific foundations of a moral universe, struck at first by analytic philosophy, was followed somewhat more than a half-century later by a more destructive blow from science itself. It now seemed to be proved by observation of the senses, and by strictly logical inference from such observation, backed up by a large amount of experimental results, that the world was not created by a wise and good God, but was being brought into existence by a ceaseless process of mechanical evolution. Moreover, this process of evolution itself was far enough from being conducted with any great amount of regard for moral considerations, — at least as morality is conceived of in its applications to human society. The world of the evolutionary hypothesis seemed very far from being permeated with the perfection of moral wisdom or unspotted benevolence.

A bitter controversy arose. On the one side was the often quite ridiculous spectacle of theology trying to drag science over the line, to the support of its now fast-fading faiths; on the other side appeared a crowd of doughty youthful "scientists," shouting denial of their own most fundamental convictions, in the fear that some of these beliefs might be captured

by theology and turned into proofs of its traditional faiths.

A half-century of contradictions and compromises has brought about a much improved condition of accepted beliefs both of science and of religion with regard to the way and the degree in which the physical universe displays, or evinces, the moral principles, out of which men form their social and religious ideals, and which they consider, to some good extent at least as binding in all matters of their conduct toward one another. The improvement has been effected chiefly by acceptance of the recommendation which Lotze issued in his Academical lectures of 1878; — "that the two hostile parties should return to modesty; — namely, that theological learning on the one side and irreligious natural science on the other, should not assert that they have exact knowledge about so very much which they neither do know nor can know. It would therefore presuppose that, in the recognition of divine mysteries which are left to the interpretation of each believing mind, and of general ethical precepts concerning the meaning of which, moreover, there exists no controversy, the religious life may unfold itself in accordance

with the motto: *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.*"

Just now, however, we are interested in calling attention to the fact that the scientific attitude contains within itself at least the germs of a belief that *quasi*-moral considerations do lie at the foundations of the world's constitution and evolution. This is in a way true, though less obviously true, even of its purely physical and chemical processes. The æsthetical qualities of the physical universe, the belief in the existence and value of which we have just attributed to the very nature of modern Science, is, of itself, closely allied to, if it is not in essence a part of a moral belief. Only attribute a sort of consciousness to the things that are so sublime in their obedience to law and order, and you endow them with moral quality. This sentiment, with its accompanying activity of the imagination, is so very natural and spontaneous, that the reflective mind can scarcely escape its powerful influence. Climbing in the Alps, or gazing on the Himalayas from Prospect Hill, Darjeeling, the most agnostic devotee of experimental science can scarcely help believing for the moment in nature's immanent Divinity.

> "As the dew is dried up by the morning sun,
> So are the sins of mankind dried up
> At the sight of Himachal";

thus runs a passage in the Rāmāyana. In this confession, the modern agnostic joins with the Hindū theosophist. By this confession he makes it evident that he cannot look upon physical nature without influences from his own moral nature permeating its aspect and directing his point of view. Indeed, the violent accusation of immorality, as some men reckon immorality, which is so often and so thoughtlessly brought against the bearing on human interests of natural processes, is itself an indirect, but no less significant testimony to a belief that these processes have some sort of moral character.

It is, however, when we come to consider the nature and methods of the psychological and historical sciences, — of economics, politics, sociology, and the science of religion, that the influences of this form of belief become most apparent. Try as hard as they may, — and they do sometimes try very hard, with no little display of twistings and turnings, — these *sciences* can not exclude from their very incorporation the moral sentiments and the

belief in the realities and values corresponding to human moral ideals. As purely non-moral efforts, the psychological and historical sciences have no existence. Even the discussions into which they enter, and the proofs which they bring forward, in the effort to show that they have little or nothing to do with ethical conceptions and ethical ideals, are quite sufficient evidence of the exact contrary. What a spectacle is afforded by the gigantic efforts of Nietzsche and his followers among the economists, historians, and political philosophers, to maintain that the supremacy of might is the higher morality! The man with a faith in moral ideals, as of necessity entering into all the sciences of this description is quite surely entitled to say to these men who have raised an altar with this inscription, "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD"; "What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you."

From such beliefs as those we have just been considering, it is an easy and swift passage to certain forms of belief which condition and shape all man's Social Development. Indeed, we find ourselves dealing, not so much with two distinct classes of beliefs as with essentially

the same beliefs looking out in different directions and upon different but related classes of objects. This reciprocal influence is particularly marked in the case of the religious belief in the so-called *supernatural.* All economic, social, and political developments, and all the attempts to deal scientifically with these developments, have always been, and still are, powerfully influenced by the belief in the superhuman and supernatural. The effect of this belief has of late come to be considered as in general either negative or positively repressing and retarding. Doubtless, it has not infrequently proved so. But between the scientific conception of the natural and the belief in the supernatural, — not, indeed, as *contra*-nature or as wholly *extra*-natural, but as *infra*-natural (the spiritual as the very living soul and essential being of the natural), — there need be no settled opposition, not to say, irreconcilable antagonism. As has already been shown in the discussion of the conceptions of Matter and Nature (p. 155 ff.), science and faith do not eliminate, but rather supplement, the one the other.

Among the greater beliefs which make human society and social development possible, we

may notice the following. Society cannot be organized at all without placing a certain amount of faith in the stability and trustworthiness of man's physical environment. It is the special work of the positive sciences, both physical and psychological, to discover and promulgate the conditions and limitations of this belief. If everybody, at all times, cherished and acted upon the belief of the millenarian or the political Cassandra, human society would soon become chaotic and before long come to an end. The effect on our social and economic beliefs by periods of wide-spreading physical disaster, when for every man *his* world at least seems to be undergoing destruction by earthquake, plague, or war, is too well known to be enforced by a large number of selected examples. It is no time for marrying and giving in marriage, or for engaging in new business and social schemes, when the walls of Jerusalem are falling.

Like all our beliefs, this one in the stability and general good-will of Nature, is often enough disappointed. But however often disappointed, it rallies again and, with its rallying, the customary social constitutions resume their sway. No number of repetitions to the process of

disillusionment so far as the particular forms taken by the belief are concerned, suffices to make men believe that Dame Nature has altogether "gone back" on them. Seed is always cast into the ground or upon the waters in the faith that it will return, several fold, after the appointed days. The belief is temporarily disappointed; but it revives in even a stronger form. For the growth of knowledge as to nature's ways introduces new and improved kinds of seeds, improved and vastly more productive modes of culture, and economics in the preservation and distribution of the fruits of toil. But all the new machinery, all the developments of the products of the field, the work-shop, and the laboratory, are necessarily created and employed in the confidence that the world of things is not fundamentally capricious, that it is, so to say, "disposed to be reasonable;" that it is somehow — at the worst in a somewhat vague, figurative way — akin and friendly to the mind of man and responsive to his more unchanging and intimate necessities. The foundation which this belief affords to all the many species of human social developments, in all the history of man's social progress, is superficially shifty and precarious; but there

is bed-rock somewhere underneath. And surely, without it, society could not exist.

It is instructive to note in this connection, how certain crude and primitive religious beliefs and superstitions mingle with this confidence in the stability and good-will toward the wise and industrious man, which is expected from Nature. Everywhere among savages and civilized ancients alike, the gods were believed to take an interest in the results of agriculture and handicraft. They need, therefore, to be placated by offerings and prayers, or by grateful acknowledgement and sharing in the fruits of men's labors. In ancient Egypt it was Osiris who showed men how to water and till the fields. The same service was performed for the Hellenes by Demeter. Amidst a quite different physical and social environment, the ancient Peruvians held that the sun-god sent two of his children, Manko Kapak and Mama Ogllo, to teach agriculture to man. In China it is the office of the Emperor, as the only one worthy to represent the nation in the worship of Shang Tî, who himself conducts the course of the furrow made by the plow at the opening of the season for agriculture. Now all this mixture of beliefs, partly intellectual, as modified

unceasingly by experience of one sort, and partly religious, as awakened and cherished by experience of another sort, combines to shape the social institutions and social development of every community of human souls.

But society is even more obviously dependent on certain personal faiths as existing among the members who compose it. In order to come into existence in the first instance, every form of social organization involves the trust of man in his fellow man. Men cannot unite socially, unless they believe in, "take stock in," one another. Universal disbelief, taking the form of absolute distrust of everybody by everybody, would speedily disintegrate society, would indeed make its initial stages quite impossible. In the simplest and least exacting of human relations, men must exercise and practice fairly under this belief in order to insure a small measure of success by their co-operation. The song of the porters loading the boats on "Dear Mother Volga," is a thoroughly vital affair:

> "If all don't grasp together,
> We can never lift the weight."

The personal faith of the liege lord in his *samurai* retainer, and the responsive faith of

the *samurai* in his liege lord, characterized both for good and for evil the Old Japan; the same faith of personal loyalty made possible the success of the New Japan in the more recent tests of its social and political strength and integrity. As was once said of the late Prince Ito to the author, when surprise was expressed at the implicit nature of his confidences: "It is the invariable habit of the Prince when he trusts anyone, to trust him absolutely." Without some large and glorious faith of this sort it is especially difficult, it is indeed quite impossible, for anyone to act the part of a great teacher, of the founder of new social institutions, or of the reformer of social abuses and degradation. It is this personal faith which secures and perpetuates such organizations as the Society of Jesus, the Masonic Order, and as well the Mafia, the "gun-squad," and the "gang" of ruffians. And, of course, neither states nor churches could exist without it.

How sadly and frequently this faith of men in one another is disappointed, no matter what particular interest or phase of human social organization it represents; What need is there to tell? The man of middle life or beyond does not exist, who cannot recall many instances of

its failure. Jesus trusted his whole cause to twelve men; and one of them was a traitor, and another in a "funk" of cowardice betrayed him. And are not present events teaching us how little confidence can be placed in the most solemn treaty obligations or protestations of moral principle? But men will continue to form domestic relations, and make friendships, and frame contracts and treaties, and associate themselves in manifold ways on terms of mutual confidences, as long as human society exists. And this for the very good reason that, without this faith in persons and confidence in personal relations, society could not exist. There are hypocrites and backsliders in abundance; but churches cannot be established and continued, otherwise than upon the basis of some kind of confession and covenant.

Not only *some* faith, and some *largeness* of faith, but a decidedly *optimistic* faith of men in one another, is necessary to the highest interests and noblest developments of human society. In some meaning of that much abused and quite ordinarily misunderstood word, all great and successful reformers have been "optimists"; all the great social up-lifts have been in response to the pressure and upward pull of the ideals

of "optimism." But we are now within the confines of permissible human hopes, rather than within the stricter limits of the most highly probable beliefs of the scientific or the social sort.

It is through morality, however, and the beliefs which are born in and fostered by the moral consciousness, that the welfare and lasting goods of human society are made possible. If society were left *solely* to the matter-of-fact experience of the consequences of wrong-doing, for survival of the belief in the fruitfulness of righteousness, and for the confirmation of its fears of the results of unrighteousness, it would not stop short in sin of its utter destruction. It is the undying belief of humanity in the values of moral judgment, and in the obligations and worth of moral ideals, which saves the race from becoming one big and hopeless collection of incorrigible and irredeemable evil-doers. It is these moral beliefs which prevent the world from becoming one vast prison for those condemned to life-servitude, or one vast hospital for those afflicted with loathsome and fatal diseases. Under the worst social conditions there has always been a remnant that was, not only itself salvable, but

that had salt in it for the salvation of others. If we did but know it, it would probably be shown true that, under the worst conditions, the majority, rather than a small remnant, were still in the way of possible salvation through the power of their moral and religious beliefs. Indeed, it is not impossible that the very essentials of human existence are bound up with the continuance and fate of these moral and religious beliefs. For the individual, to lose them utterly would be to cease to exist as a person. But human society is composed of individual persons, not of individual things or animals. Its very material, its "raw stuff," so to say, cannot be furnished at all, except as it is found dependent upon the continuance and the triumph of moral beliefs.

This belief in the social excellence of morality is no new affair; nor is it by any means confined to modern civilized man. In the most "ancient book in the world," the *Maxims of Ptah-hotep*, we are told: "Justice is great, invariable, assured; it has not been disturbed since the age of Osiris." "God will take away the bread of him who enriches himself by inspiring fear." Of the most embryonic and primitive of social organizations Professor

Tito Vignoli says ("Myth and Science," p. 41): "There is not a society, however rude and primitive, in which all these relations, both to the individual and to society at large, are not apparent; and these are based on superstitions and mythical beliefs." But these beliefs, like all other of the greater human beliefs, are constantly undergoing a process of purification which increases their reasonableness, and so plants them yet more firmly at the very roots of human social development.

In this connection we remark upon the hopeless fallacy involved in certain forms of Socialism as a theory and as a cult. This arises from its misplaced belief in the unregulated goodness and untrained wisdom of average human nature. But still more viciously does Nihilism, in certain of its forms and practices, trust the passionate and blind impulse against existing wrongs, for the justification of the destruction of all the political and social institutions which have been consecrated by the slowly developing beliefs of the past. Superstitions, economic, political, social, moral and religious, must all — we cannot recall the obligation too often — submit themselves to the test of reasonableness. But the test of reasonableness is not to be

found by putting our confidence in "dreams of the pipe" or of the maniac's cell. If we will understand it aright, and in no scornfully undemocratic way, there is sound truth in the call: "We want first of all the few, . . . the blossoming of the race. It is necessary that these be found, or that they find themselves and that they take their true orbits and live their true lives. . . . For the temple of humanity has not only the broad floor, but the cross glittering above the pinnacle." (Stephen Graham, "A Tramp's Sketches," p. 332.)

The solid and lasting foundations for the necessary social beliefs of the most reasonable and reasonably optimistic sort are moral and religious faiths. They depend upon the confidence in the supreme value and final triumph of the morally good, and that "All's well," for "God is at the helm." But these faiths, in their turn, demand and merit a fuller examination in the light of reflective thought.

CHAPTER VII

THE FAITHS OF MORALITY

FROM this time onward the word "faith" will be more frequently employed than the word "belief" in discussion of the various problems falling under the answer to the main inquiry, "What should I Believe?" The reasons for this change in the usage of terms are chiefly these two. The former word is distinctly better adapted to arouse and express the different attitudes taken by the mind — or, rather by the entire Self — toward the objects, conceptions, principles and ideals of morality and religion. Faith is also, in its own proper and customary meaning, more obviously and more intimately subject to the will to believe, and so more appropriately made a matter of consciously recognized obligation. At any rate, this difference is fairly well illustrated in the popular speech as well as by the definitions of the dictionaries. Hence, it is both better ethics and better manners to urge

the duty of having faith in the greater truths of morality and religion than to insist upon the solemn obligation to adopt the tenets, and practice the methods, of any political party; or to espouse the speculations of any group of scientists or school of philosophers. It is also significant that exceptions to this rule are usually based upon the claims of the speculators in politics, science, or philosophy, to be themselves prepared to stand the test of moral principles.

It will further help the clearness of our thinking and the precision of the maxims which it is hoped finally to educe for purposes of practical improvement, if we mention briefly some of the more important distinctions which are to be made between the meanings of these two words. In certain relations they are correctly enough employed with little or no distinction. This is the case even when men are speaking of subjects in ethics and religion. But even then, I think, a somewhat different shade of meaning is expressed, and certainly a quite different degree, if not kind of feeling is awakened, by the use of the word "belief" and the use of the word "faith." Both of these words imply intellectual activity, and some

degree of intelligent apprehension of the reality of the object, or the verity of the proposition, in whose behalf the conscious mental assent is invited. But belief is the more general, and the more distinctly intellectual term. Belief is suggestive of a certain deferential attitude before more or less probable evidence looking toward a possible future "knowledge-judgment." Faith, while it oftener suggests the loftiest flights of imagination, the most passionate forms of conviction, and the firmest attachments of the will, is not, in the individual act so much concerned with the degree of the probability of the evidence on which it is then based. Especially in religious, and also to a less extent in moral matters, it is customary to distinguish between intellectual belief in the truth presented to the mind, and the fastening of the truth on the heart and will in the attitude of faith.

It must not, however, be hastily concluded from this warrantable as well as popular distinction, that the truths of morality and religion can present themselves as duties to be performed, without at the same time recognizing their own duty of perpetually striving to make the form of their presentation a more reasonable

form. "Bible religion" — to employ Cardinal Newman's sweetly sarcastic (?) phrase, is never the equivalent of the religious faith required by this religion. On the contrary, it is too often the substitute for, or stifler of, genuine religious faith. "Bible religion" may be only a notional affair; and to a large degree incorrectly notional, at that, and not a genuine experience of intelligent assent. But without the intellectual element which is, the rather, characterized by the word belief, there can be no real faith. This is not, however, true to the full extent of justifying the declaration of Emerson, which is made in his customary suggestive but precariously unqualified way: "The religion which is to guide and fulfil the present, whatever else it is, must be intellectual. The scientific mind must have a faith which is science." The truth is better told in the sentence already quoted from Saint Bernard: "These two" (Faith and Reason in the narrower meaning of the latter word) "comprehend the same truth; but faith in closed and involuted, intelligence in exposed and manifest, form."

Another difference very commonly observed in the popular usage, regards faith as chiefly

personal; belief as essentially, quite impersonal. As says the dictionary: "We speak of *belief* of a proposition, *faith* in a promise, because a promise emanates from a person." On the other hand, the two words become most nearly, if not wholly, identical in meaning, when they are used with reference to persons or personal relations. In these uses, both are regularly followed by the significant little word "in." We believe in our friend, or we have faith in him; it is almost immaterial which phrase we employ. And yet not quite; for there is another more obvious difference between the two attitudes of mind. Faith is a warm, hearty, and albeit emotional, a very practical sort of word. For when used as to personal relations, it imports a union of belief and trust. This distinguishing characteristic comes most prominently to view, when we consider what a different thing it is to believe in *a* God and to have faith in *our* God. It is this essential aspect of faith which makes it the guaranty of morality in all relations with our fellow men, and the very essence of subjective religion in respect of man's attitude toward the Divine Being.

Out of this conception of faith comes the

Belief is passive; faith is active.

trust we have in personal testimony, "fiducial rather than intellectual belief"; out of it also flows the fine and fundamental virtue of fidelity, or loyalty to causes and to persons. What Lubbock says of two ancient worthies is true of the host of the faithful in heaven and on earth: "The self-sacrifice of Leonidas, and the faith of Regulus, are the glories of history." Fidelity in action answers to the keeping of the faith regarded as a creed or system of articles embodying moral or religious beliefs. "'Tis not the dying for a faith that's so hard, Master Harry . . . 'tis the living up to it."

There is one other consideration which may properly influence our choice of the word Faith to indicate the nature of the dutiful, if also reasonable, attitude of the personal life toward the truths of morality and religion. This is found in the fact that this attitude is regularly taken toward certain judgments that *have value;* because they embody, in however inchoate and imperfect form, certain ideals that claim control over the spirit of man. On this account, our moral and religious beliefs and the conduct of life that responds, either by way of assent or of dissent, to these ideals, and so the entire development of the choicer

factors and higher destinies of the personal life, have a supreme worth.

It is, then, not hard to see how the faiths of morality and religion have a peculiar kind of claims, both of a rational and also of a more obviously practical order, upon every person who raises seriously the question, What should I believe? These same faiths, on account of their peculiar nature and relations to the whole intellectual, emotional and practical character of the personal life, offer certain more profound and enduring satisfactions than can be gained by the intellectual acceptance of any other class of truths, such as are made probable in dependence upon scientific exactness or strictly logical consistency. Of all man's beliefs, it is by his moral and religious faiths, that his most intimate character is formed and must be judged; and that his realest and highest success in the evolution of the personal and spiritual life will be eventually determined.

In saying what has just been urged in favor of a specially careful choice of one's moral and religious faiths, there has been no shadow of the intent to withdraw, not to say contradict, what was formerly said in speaking of the duty attached to the acceptance or the rejection of

every form of belief. This is the duty of having regard to the "reasonableness" of any belief, when it appears before the will to believe with its claims to an intelligent and righteous adoption into one's family of beliefs. Moral and religious faiths are probably of an intrinsic nature which forbids their being constructed and defended in terms quite satisfactory to the demands of the positive sciences so-called. But that does not diminish their essential reasonableness; nor does it essentially impair their claims upon our moral and religious consciousness to espouse them as faiths to live and to die by. This caution is repeated here as one always to be kept in mind when considering any form of belief; and as especially pertinent when we are confining our attention to the faiths of morality and religion. We do not propose to argue it anew. We shall, however, present some of the many and almost incomparably weighty reasons for a carefully selected faith in the conceptions, principles and ideals of morality. If we have little or no hope of attaining the really undesirable end of a scientific demonstration; we do desire to help ourselves to a generous portion from "The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." The

fruit of this tree makes excellent sauce with which to season our convictions respecting the good and bad of conduct; also respecting its standing in the market of values, its usefulness in promoting a sanitary form of living the present life, and perhaps of more surely attaining to the life eternal.

It may, then, be unequivocally affirmed that the faith in moral ideals makes a strong appeal before the will to believe, in the name of reason. For, in the first place, these ideals are developments from the accumulated reflection and enlarging social experience of the race through countless centuries. There was never, indeed, a time when, and never a race of men so low in the scale of development that, the distinction does not appear between that-which-is and that-which-ought-to-be, in matters of conduct and of character. This is the same thing as to say that there has always existed before the mind and will of humanity, *some kind* of ideals of the personal life as a moral affair. The more precise nature of these ideals has, indeed, undergone some change, some important changes; but these have been, in most instances, changes of emphasis and of opportunity rather than alterations in the essential char-

acter of the ideals themselves. As we have elsewhere said ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 363 f.): "It should be joyfully noticed in this connection how much opportunity for Individuality this view of the unity of virtue permits to every man. Virtuous living is not living in conformity to any one pattern of conduct. It is no dead monotonous agreement in a sort of common stock of virtues, from which each man may win more or less for himself. No man's list either of virtues or of vices precisely resembles that of any other man. Indeed, no man's anger, or pride, or wisdom, or courage, or justice, or kindness, is precisely the counterpart of the same qualities in another. For the unity is in and of each individual selfhood."

It is then undoubtedly true, as Plato long ago saw, that "no single category will adequately express the nature of our highest ideals of the Good." These ideals, whether they are those of art, or of religion, or — the case we are now considering — of morality, are susceptible of development; and in order to be followed in a spirit of hopeful pursuit, they must be adaptable to the differences that constitute the temperament and the character of the individuals called to, and capable of, a

real personal life, as well as to the vicissitudes of their local environment and historical circumstances. To follow them is not to be precisely like any other person, or even to be precisely like our own best selves at any one time. But such is the case with all human ideals. Such is the quality which enhances their practical value.

There is, however, another, though cognate aspect of the moral ideals to which attention must be directed in order to emphasize the duty of having faith in them. In trying to establish their reasonableness we have spoken of the appeal which they make to reason as the products of the reflection and experience of the whole race through the centuries of its history, so far as we can read the records of this history. This aspect emphasizes their universality and their universally powerful influence. They have proved their claim to our faith and to our fidelity by proving the sincerity of their own faith through their works. We cannot set forth this other and complementary side of the same truth better than by quoting another somewhat longer passage from the same work to which reference was just made (p. 651 f.). "The impression is confirmed and justified

that the *moral ideals* of humanity are the most important factors in the moral life and historical development of man. That this estimate is true has been abundantly proved by the study of ethical phenomena. A similar estimate can be justified of man's more definitely æsthetical and religious ideals. In fact, human history — whether it be the history of the individual, or of the race, or of any particular part of the race, or particular social organization — cannot be understood without admitting that it is all largely founded upon, shot through and through with, guided and inspired by, ideals and judgments of worth. Human history *is* the record of man's striving to realize his progressively unfolding ethical, artistic, and religious ideals.

"This fundamental truth has its practical side. No philosophy which does not give large room, profound significance, and a mighty potency to the Ideal, can account for the experience of man. Not to use the word in a narrow and technical way, *Idealism* is the only form of philosophy which can claim to explain the realities of human experience. In a way which gives the key to the rules of right moral practice, it may also be asserted that no one

who is not an idealist can possibly be a good man; can even know what kind of reality is meant by the very word Goodness.

"Virtue necessitates belief in the permanency and unconditioned worth of ideas. For virtue *is* the realization by the actual and historical Self of an ideal selfhood. Morality, or subjective goodness, consists in devotion to the ideal. The nature of the right and the goal of objective morality is given in the progressive realization of the universal, social Ideal. Thus it is that, without the constructive, idealizing activities of thought and imagination; and without the awakening of faith, hope, and inspiration, having for their object these constructions; and without the dominance and guidance of the practical life by these activities; morality is impossible for man. No other work could be less easily spared by man's moral evolution than that which is wrought by this constructive and idealizing activity of his imagination in the ethico-religious life."

These moral ideals, then, exhibit a consistency of constitution, and an endurance under all attempts to disintegrate and disprove them, which is one of the most marvellous facts of human history. So far as the individual can

try them by the experimental test, it is testimony of the wisest and morally sanest of mankind, that they bear the test well. In spite of biblical authority, it is not in fact true that "the righteous are never forsaken nor their seed seen begging bread." And many a Job has seemed to himself for a time to have abundant reason to say:

> "Behold I cry out of wrong,
> but I am not heard:
> I cry for help, but there is no justice."

But they who, in spite of these passing experiences, cling with the grasp of a faith, that has drawn near to, and even looked into the pit of Despair, are generally wont to join in the final words of the hero, as the curtain drops at the close of this most wonderful of moral dramas:

> "I had heard of thee
> by the hearing of the ear;
> But now mine eye seeth thee:
> Wherefore I abhor myself,
> And repent in dust and ashes.

Here again we must refer to the truth that in all classes of the greater beliefs of humanity, and especially in the faiths of morality and religion, their reasonableness cannot be fairly estimated, cannot even have its claims understood, without taking into chief account the

facts of the beliefs and faiths themselves. This *enduring* nature of the faith of man in the worth of his moral ideals is truly one of the most suggestive and impressive of psychical and spiritual phenomena. Some of the most pitiful and tragic spectacles in the lives of the choicest sons and daughters of humanity, — of those most worthy to be called true sons and daughters of God, — bear thrilling witness to the unconquerable nature of this faith. No cogency of argument that sets out from the tenets of a eudæmonistic philosophy, no appeals to the profitableness of abandoning or concealing one's position of a sworn allegiance to these ideals, no ecclesiastical or political subtleties, succeed in moving the will of such faithful ones to desert to the other side. Their faith seems fanatical; it may indeed be really fanatical. But reasonable, or not, as respects the conscious grounds on which it firmly places itself, and worthy as it may be for the time of a certain degree of condemnation for its lack of reasonableness, it is always significant testimony to the essential characteristics of the convictions that attach themselves, by act of will, to faith in the worth of moral ideals. And not infrequently, that which the superficial estimate, blurred senti-

ment, and corrupt practice, of the current time has convicted of fanaticism, turns out to have been, the rather, a sort of untimely, yet divinely inspired insight into a future nobler and worthier embodiment in human faith and human practice of the moral ideals.

Closely connected with this consideration, or, indeed, as an essential part of it, is that optimistic faith which founds and cherishes an undying confidence in the final triumph of the morally good; and of all the other goods that are involved in, and dependent upon, this supreme good. The optimism that is born of faith in the ultimate triumph of the ideals of morality is the only kind of optimism that rests on solid grounds. Unless the moral ideals of the race are clung to, developed toward higher degrees of reasonableness, *in their own right*, as the saying is, and made more dominant; neither civil service, nor economic advantage, nor scientific progress, will secure the increased welfare of mankind. As long as these ideals maintain the same low standard and feebleness of faith in their right to control the human will, the injustices of peace and the cruelties of war will not cease or even be mitigated in any large degree. The sack of Yang Chou-fu by the

Manchus in 1645, when the soldiery murdered and plundered and outraged, within ten days, nearly one million innocent men, women and children, was scarcely more beastly than that of the Tartar City at Sian-fu, two hundred and sixty-five years later, by the Chinese who boasted of their modern culture and zeal as reformers! And the behavior of modern militarism in Christian Europe, when it forsakes the moral ideals of the religion of Jesus for the maxims of a might that makes right as its political ideal, shows scanty improvement over that of ancient Imperial Rome. Yet an eye-witness and sufferer from the horrors of more than two and a half centuries ago closes his sad narrative with this reflection: "Perchance posterity, born in a happier age, may be interested in perusing this diary, and it may serve to point a moral for the unreflecting. It may even cause vindictive and cruel-minded men to reflect on the error of their ways, and thus be of some value, as a solemn warning."

This problem, — namely, that of the final prevalence of moral ideals, and of the duty of an optimistic faith in them, — when viewed from the more definitely religious point of view, becomes the problem of evil as judged from

the stand-point of faith in God as perfect Ethical Spirit. That it costs — costs heavily and persistently, enormous loads of toil and suffering — to get ahead with these ideals, the facts forbid us to deny. Our faith in them, in their high worthiness and essential conquering quality, if they are given time enough, must often persist in spite of the patent facts. But the fact that it does so persist is a powerful item of proof of its own trustworthiness. The faith of optimism is not susceptible of proof by appeal to the course of human history, if we neglect the character and the persistence and the powerful influence of that faith itself. This faith does not rest wholly, or chiefly, on purely empirical grounds. It can never be, and really it never is, established by the calculations of economists, or the partisan claims of politicians, or the traveller's observations of the signs of culture and of material prosperity. But it claims reasonableness for itself, as it springs from the very depths of the personal life, commends itself to the spirit when making up its estimates of what has real and lasting value in human affairs, and fastens itself upon the will in a way to demand at all costs its fullest and most loyal allegiance.

Voltaire was not so great a scoffer at the religious dogma and ritual of his own day that, profoundly moved by the disaster to Lisbon, he could not write:

> "*All will one day be well,* we fondly hope;
> That *all is well today,* is but the dream
> Of erring men, however wise they seem;
> And God alone is right."

The faiths of morality put a weight of stern obligation upon the moral consciousness of every individual man, and of every community and age in the historical evolution of mankind. Inasmuch as all moral ideals have, from their very nature, a bearing on the control of conduct, they enter at once into the sphere of obligation. They appear clothed in sacred garb at the throne-room of conscience. We may *not* say whether we will or will not, examine into their reasonableness. We may *not* say, whether we will, or will not, try to choose the best available among them for our very own. These faiths are not beliefs, to be suspected of superstition as they stand begging before the closed door of the human Will. They give a mandatory summons upon that door. And if we are lovers of righteousness, we will not compel them to plead in the words of Israel's great Love Song,

"Open to me . . .

. . . . . .

For my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night."

As a sort of corollary or practical inference from this faith in the value and ultimate triumph of the ideals of morality, is the belief in the retributive character of good and bad conduct as considered from the moral point of view. This aspect of the problem becomes in the higher forms of monotheistic religion the problem of evil in a universe whose creator and moral ruler is assumed to be a perfectly just and good God. Theology and the philosophy of religion call it an attempt at a Theodicy, or justification of the ways of God to man. This is the question which puzzled the patriarch Job: "Why do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?" It is the same question which the poet Theognis put into the words: "How canst thou, O son of Saturn, put the sinner and the just man on the same footing?" But the pressure of the faith in moral ideals, as these ideals have approached nearer to the goal of a complete reasonableness, has compelled increasing confidence in the firm connection between righteousness and blessedness; although both the righteousness and the

blessedness which belongs of right to righteousness, may have to be approached along a path thickly strewn with wrong-doing and its retributive sorrows and pains. Even those systems of reflective thinking which have espoused a sort of moral dualism, and so have represented the schism between the two as eternally seated in the universe, — Evil and Good, and the hopeless, never-ending strife between the two, — have not really escaped the confidence and the hope that characterize the faith of moral optimism. As Pfleiderer says of the oldest and, in a way, the most respectable of these forms of moral Dualism: "The peculiarity of the reform of Zarathustra appears to have consisted in this, that he placed the opposed spirits of the Iranian Nature-religion in two hostile kingdoms, each presided over by a spiritual power; and that, nevertheless, by his exalted idea of the good God and Creator he approached closely to monotheism."

But the other side of this faith in the ideals of morality is the belief in an equally firm connection between suffering and unrighteousness. Even original Buddhism, the religion of Sākya-Muni, although it denied the reality of the gods of Hindūism and the substantial and

eternal existence of the human soul, could not dispense with that belief in retributive justice which is, so to say, the complement of the faith in the value and ultimate triumph of moral ideals. This confidence early Buddhism undertook to express in its doctrine of Karma. "A man's deeds are like seeds," said Gautama; "and wherever his personality may be, there these seeds repose." But in the later developments of Buddhism, the necessity of pictorial concreteness revived and embellished with all its possible horrors, the dogma of a hell of material torture administered by vindictive and more than humanly cruel justice.

The modern age has dropped the embellishments of a belief in the retributive side of the ideals of morality. Indeed, it has gone further, and has succeeded in largely obscuring or discrediting the idea which they attempted to make emphatic in physically repulsive ways. But it has not at all altered the foundations of this belief, as they are laid in the faiths of ethics; whether these faiths be stated in scholastic or in more popular form. Righteousness and blessedness go hand in hand, if we have reference to their march down through the centuries. Unrighteousness is inevitably followed by suffer-

ing, — some time, some how, by some one; this is the law of an ethically constituted universe. It is a law which, in the long run, maintains itself over individuals, over communities, over nations, and between individuals and nations.

We cannot indeed indisputably trace in every individual case, and perhaps not in the majority of individual cases, the sufferings of individuals to their own wrong-doing. And it is by no means the most truly righteous, who are most conspicuous in attributing their prosperity, of whatever kind, to their own distinction in righteousness. But on the whole, about all the inescapable ills of life, which every individual is called upon to bear, are due to his own or to some other's wrong-doing. On the other hand, every one who, as the saying is, "aims to do right," although he may not always hit the mark, is entitled to the fullest measure of comfort from that grand and beautiful saying of our favorite Stoic philosopher: "It is difficult, I own, to blend and unite tranquillity in accepting, and energy in using, the facts of life; but it is not impossible." Still less of doubt can be thrown upon the belief that it is wrong conduct which produces most of the confusion

and suffering in the relations of classes, and parties, and ranks, and degrees of social or educational or financial distinctions. While, that it is the crimes of peace which produce the woes of war between nations, there is no ground for reasonable doubt.

From all this it follows that the triumph of the ideals of morality must come through the putting-down in some way of the forces of immorality. And the beginning of this is the self-conquest of the individual in the interest of those ideals, the free-choice of a will yielding itself without reserve to the control of those ideals. This is the essence of the personal life, as understood and cultivated from the points of view afforded by the high-places on which are erected the altars of moral faith.

We have returned, then, to the conclusion to which we were conducted when examining the essential distinctions between the lesser and the greater faiths; and the claims which the latter make upon, and the obligations under which they lay, those who are the rich possessors of the gift of personal life. The faiths of morality are such that without them personality cannot exist. Without their acceptance by the will to believe, the personal life cannot develop sanely

and successfully. Without cherishing them, the obligations of the personal life cannot be fulfilled. Without their recognition and development, the constitution of society and all social evolution are impossible.

With all our boasting over our social development — some of which is justified, but most of which is quite unjustified — it can scarcely be denied that the temptations to be weak and delinquent in the faiths of morality are very powerful and efficient at the present time. Indeed, there is no little suppressed contempt, if not open scorn, for some of those ideals of conduct which the best thought and noblest action of the race have evolved in its past history. Among these, the earnest inquirer, What should I believe? may note the following, and be on his guard against them as the chief temptations.

Doubtless, we shall not touch and set vibrating any popular chord of sympathy, by the claim that the current advices of the prevalent ethical and speculative philosophy are decidedly opposed to much profound and efficient faith in the ideals of morality. We do not think to convict any unwilling soul, or even any uninformed mind, by uttering warnings against

"Empiricism," "Pragmatism," or the doctrines of Nietzsche and his followers, — frankly avowed, or *pseudo*, or otherwise. He who thinks that the *Uebermensch*, is a moral man, or that the higher ethics authorizes nations to use all means in the interests of their own aggrandizement, is already far beyond the range of our voice, whether for purposes of denunciation, or warning, or entreaty. But we would have every man who honestly asks himself the question, What should *I* believe? examine thoroughly the consequences, as well as the positions of these philosophies in their bearing on the faiths of morality.

And this brings us to another yet more subtle temptation. The age is disinclined to reflection, — especially on fundamental matters of morals and religions. In its clamor for the "practical," it has quite too often and sadly forgotten that the moral *is* the practical; and that, no more in morals than in any other form of manufacture, can you get the desired product without using the correct method. The right method cannot be secured, presented to the will, and made the object of intelligent choice, without first being subjected to reflection. Even our most active men in experimental

science are bitterly complaining of the meagreness of their results, because they have no time for reflection. But the more foreboding phenomenon is the fact that so little of the results which are put forth in the name of science can afford any sure basis for reflection. The same thing is true of our politics, of our law, of our literature, of our education. For debate is not reflection, whether conducted by fluent pens or strident voices. But above all, is this unwillingness or practical inability to reflect pernicious in its effects upon the faiths of morality and religion.

A kindred temptation arises from the pressure of interests that cannot possibly be made consistent with moral ideals. Who can maintain that the prevailing methods of business, of politics, of intercourse between individuals and nations are being shaped chiefly by intelligent regard for the inestimable worth and destined triumph of the ideals of morality? About as little doubt is there that our educational and religious institutions, and even our missionary organizations, are far enough from resisting the tremendous pressure brought to bear upon them in directions adverse to those in which they would be conducted by a perfect

and consistent faith in the value and in the final supremacy of moral ideals. Even the decline of any sort of interest in these ideals is, in too many quarters, quite obvious enough to dispense with any reference to particulars.

But all these temptations afford no adequate excuse for the man who does not bow his will to this answer to our question: You should pin your faith to the ideals of morality; and you should, with fidelity, gallantry, and endurance, hold by this faith. In this way, we may not, indeed, escape the experience to which Schiller refers in his ode "To The Ideal."

> "The space between the Ideal of man's soul
> And man's achievement, who hath ever passed?"

But we may escape the necessity of lamenting,

> "Gone the divine and sweet believing
> In dreams which Heaven itself unfurled."

In a word, then, the faith in moral ideals, in their validity, value, and final triumph, and in their practical control of the issues of life and of human destiny, makes an imperative claim upon the reason and the will of every individual man. Some of this faith is necessary to the constitution of personality, to the "make-up" of a Self. To cherish this faith

and to make it the guide and the master of one's conduct, is the essential of all safe and true evolution of personal life. Without this form of the will to believe, — this supremely "great belief" — the final purpose of the divine gift of personality can never be realized.

In closing this Chapter there are two references to thoughts, which carry our minds far beyond the interests of any individual, that may fitly be placed upon the page. One of these emphasizes the intimate connections between the faiths of morality and the religious development of the race. These faiths must themselves, if possible, be more securely grounded in the reality of the Universe as known from every trustworthy source and convincing point of view. In the effort to bring this about we seek the aid of religion. In this way it is aimed to secure the faith in moral principles and moral ideals, by buttressing them with faith in personal, perfect Holy Spirit as the immanent Life of the World, and the ruler and redeemer of humanity. Thus a "real," as well as a "notional," apprehension, or assent by an intuitive act of belief, may be obtained for the faiths of morality.

The relation between the faiths of morality

and the higher kinds of literature is not so obvious, but it is scarcely, if at all, less intimate and binding. It is not without significance in this direction that the author of the Introduction to the German Classics finds himself obliged to admit that, for nearly a century, there has been no great religious poetry in Germany, and few or no hymns to compare in poetic fervor and dignity with the Mediæval Latin hymns; or in sweet and touching simplicity with holy George Herbert, or with the utterances in song of the German Mystics. For in truth, no great literature can arise and flourish in an age which has no vital and influential faith in a world of moral and religious ideals. It is not the world of sense, except as giving incitement to the insights, and body and form to the world of the spirit as it appears to the eye of faith, which can be the mother, or the foster-mother, of great poetry, essay, drama, philosophy or any form of *great literature*, in the more exclusive but appropriate meaning of the term.

Only moral fervor, born of a firm trust in the supreme value of spiritual realities, can produce a literature that is worthy to be called great.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FAITHS OF RELIGION

THE psychology of faith is prepared to make the most important contributions to the understanding of the phenomena of religion, whether as a personal life or as a historical development. "Everywhere," says a writer on this subject (Waitz), "essentially the same type of spiritual life meets us." "We find," says another writer, also from the historical point of view (M. Réville), "the same fundamental principles, the same laws of evolution and transformation, the same internal logic"; in a word, "a fundamental identity of spiritual being" with ourselves. And to this thought still another writer adds: "All mythology and all history of beliefs must finally turn to psychology for their satisfactory elucidation."

It will be noticed, however, by all careful readers on this subject that the word customarily employed in describing the attitude

of the human mind toward its object is, in all the lower forms of religion, the word "belief" rather than the word "faith." This distinction is significant, whether it be intelligently made or not. For in these lower forms, the mind's assent is uniformly characterized by a lack of attempts at harmony with our more positive knowledge about the facts and laws of the physical universe and of the mental and moral life of man; it is, therefore, affected with the weaknesses of credulity, the vices of superstition, and the defects of moral imbecility. When, however, the intellectual elements of belief have incorporated more of a "sweet reasonableness," and have adopted into themselves the ideals of personal life from the moral point of view, this attitude of assent itself becomes essentially changed in its character. To personal trust in a personal Object, who is conceived of as enfolding all the ideals of truth, wisdom, beauty, and goodness, as not only Absolute and Infinite but as perfect Ethical Spirit, the Father and Redeemer of man, are added love and the yielding of the will in obedience. Belief, which, while it remains mere intellectual assent, may be credulous, superstitious, and inoperative or even opposed

to the pursuit in the practical life of moral ideals, blossoms into a reasonable faith.

In order to understand such a faith, with its individual variations and its historical developments, it will be enough for our present purpose to quote from a work in which the whole subject is discussed at length and in its many phases ("Philosophy of Religion, pp. 89 f.): "Taken at its lowest terms and considered as universal with man, religion *is the belief in invisible superhuman powers (or a Power), which are (is) conceived of after the analogy of the human spirit; on which (whom) man regards himself as dependent for his well-being, and to which (whom) he is, at least in some respects, responsible for his conduct; together with the feelings and practices which follow from such a belief.* Thus the lowest form of religion is most properly denominated a 'vague and unreflecting Spiritism.'

"Thus defined the essential characteristic of religious belief, as it springs everywhere and at all times from the soul of man, is the belief in 'Other-soul that is also Over-Soul.' From this belief, and as inseparably connected with it, various feelings arise, which for their peculiar characteristics and differentiation depend upon

the character attributed to those invisible, superhuman, and spiritual powers, that are 'posited,' as it were, by the belief itself. And in an equally natural and inevitable way, certain practices having reference to these powers and to man's adjustment of his active relations toward them, form a part of religion.

"It will be seen, then, that religion considered content-wise is an attitude of the human Self toward other and superior Soul-life, which it is desirable or necessary to apprehend and to conciliate, because this Other can affect man's welfare in manifold important ways. Religion is thus essentially animistic; if only the term be employed in a sufficiently indefinite and comprehensive fashion. What is the precise nature of the spirits (or *animae*) which are thus brought by religion into relation to the life of man, is a question to which the earlier forms of belief give most vague, uncertain, and even fantastic answers. For man has, as yet, attained little or no reflective knowledge of his own Self-hood; and the stirrings of his fancy, emotional impulses, and unintelligible, obscure longings, are not at all clear as respects their significance and worth to himself. A child of nature, he views all nature as moved

and influenced by soul-life similar and yet superior to his own. His conception of his own spirit is not a fixed and well-defined affair, either as to its characteristics, or location, or relations to the body, or to other human spirits, or to the Other-and-Over Souls with which his imagination peoples the world. But inasmuch as he is sensitive to whatever affects his happiness or misery, and has the rude but potent social and ethical notions which so largely enter into his constitution as human, he desires to adjust himself to the invisible and spiritual world which is, he believes, the most important part of his environment."

The universality of religious belief, from the earliest times back to which the history of the race can be credibly traced, and down to the lowest stages of savagism or of the mythical "primitive man" to which scientific hypothesis can be respectably carried, is now conceded by practically all the most trustworthy authorities. "I have sought atheism in the lowest as well as the highest. I have nowhere met with it except in individuals or in more or less limited schools" (Quatrefages). "Hitherto no primitive people has been discovered devoid of all trace of religion" (Roskoff). "A people

destitute of all religious notions has never been discovered" (Réville). "The statement that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion, rests either on inaccurate observation or on a confusion of ideas" (Tiele). And Professor Jastrow goes so far as to conclude from a survey of the entire field of history: "The essence of true religion is to be met with in the earliest manifestations of the spiritual side of man's nature" ("A Study of Religion," p. 132).

Applying this fact of the naturalness and universality of belief in Other-spirit and Over-spirit to the case of the inquirer into the question, What should *I* believe? in the religious sphere of life and of conduct, this one answer may be even now regarded as established. It assumes the form of a point of view, from which to take into account all subsequent considerations bearing on the final answer. The man who has *no* religious faith is to this extent — and the extent is great — cut off from participation in that "unity of the human spirit," before which, in "its perpetually similar features, the individual, national, or even racial differences sink into insignificance."

Enormous differences do, however, exist,

under essentially the same type of spiritual life, in the different forms of religious belief; — and this, not only with regard to the Object of this belief as constructed by the intellect and imagination working conjointly; but also as to all the more important corollaries following, whether quite logically or not, from this central truth. On the side of the humanity of religion we may gracefully admit that

> "In even savage bosoms
> There are longings, strivings, yearnings,
> For the good they comprehend not";

but "the scent of the blossom is not in the bulb." And religious belief is, above all other forms of human belief, both obligated and able, through its own special form of development, to establish a claim to be regarded as a divine Self-revelation by the seeker after a reasonable faith.

It would be impossible for us in this little book to undertake even a sketch of the science of comparative religions and of the history of the religious development of mankind. But this is not essential to the intelligent use of "the will to believe" the essential truths of religion; even less, to the choice which commits the entire personal life and the issues of its unfolding, to a reasonable religious faith.

There are two convictions as to the nature of the Object of religious faith, and as to the attitude toward this Object which a reasonable faith involves, that may be borrowed from the study with which in the present connection we are, for practical purposes, compelled to dispense. The first is this: The rationality of this Object must be accepted as established for purposes of faith, by our increasing knowledge of the facts and laws of the physical world, but especially of the personal life and of its successful spiritual development. The second conviction is that which Professor Jastrow has so aptly characterized as the distinguishing contribution of the Hebrew prophets, — "the investiture of the one God with ethical attributes." To this Christianity added "the scent of the blossom" by imparting the spiritual freedom which Jesus had; and which the faith that was his, and is "in him," bestows on the "sons of God." But even when we commend Christianity to ourselves or to others, as placing under obligation the will to believe, we do well to remember what Augustine said: "Christianity is a river in which a lamb may walk, while an elephant must swim."

We have already rejected the demand of

Emerson, if made literally and without limitations, for a religion which *is* science. On the other hand, no man can understand the essence of the religious consciousness, or the influences which have worked most powerfully in the religious evolution of the race, and, as well, the enormous effects of religion itself in modifying all the other factors of evolution, without recognizing the fact that religious faith can lay for itself sure and satisfying foundations for the human spirit to repose upon, only as it cherishes an intellectually reasonable belief. They who do not seek for the elimination of credulity and superstition from the faiths of religion do these faiths an equal wrong with those who reject them, in the foolish opinion that they are all themselves no better than superstitions adapted to deceive the credulous. In religion, unbelief and credulity may be alike unreasonable.

It is not, then, in the vain hope to institute a positive science of religion, such as physics and astronomy (although not always on altogether indisputable proofs) boast of, in their times of confident repose, that we make diligent and serious search for some sound kernels of knowledge about the world and about ourselves, in

which to discover the sources of a reasonable religious faith. For we are quite determinedly opposed to the conception so current and so seductive to unreflecting minds, which would have us regard the beliefs of religion as essentially to be taken in the form of "pap," prepared by the "Unknown" for sensitive nerves and weak digestions, rather than as strong meat fed from the divine hand to those who crave nourishment that shall fit them for the intellectual as well as moral struggles of the present life. And if we are told that in fact, religion has always been, because it essentially is, a matter of vague fears and hopes and other emotional stirrings, which man shares at first with the lower animals, and which he must throw off in order to become rational, we flatly deny the statement. The beliefs of religion, even among the lowest savages, have been born of reflection. They are *explanations* of experiences in this world of sense by reference to an invisible and spiritual world. For savages are not without keen powers of reflection, are not incapable of subtle analyses and of far-reaching inferences. Indeed, one is tempted to think that in these respects they excel large numbers of those who constitute the most favored social

circles; not to say, an occasional modern ethnologist or psychologist. Nor is this to be wondered at, for in its origin and growth, religion is as rational as science is.

This "kernel of belief," out of which grow the intellectual elements of highly developed religious faith, has been suggestively spoken of by Carlyle as what every man should have respecting "his vital relations to the Universe, his duty, and destiny there." As Otfried Müller says of the Etruscans: "Divinity seemed to them a world of life." Or, to quote Carlyle again: "The thing a man does practically believe (and this is often enough *without* asserting it to himself, much less to others); the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain concerning his vital relations to the mysterious Universe, and his duty and destiny there, *that* is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. *That* is his religion."

But in all the nature-religions, especially in the lower forms (and the history of the development of all the greater religions, including that of the Old Testament, discovers certain of their roots in nature-worship) the Universe is not conceived of in a way to invite, or even to

make possible, a reasonable religious faith. Its own spiritual nature is divided, torn asunder between contending spirits, some having a certain good-will toward some men and others hostile to those to whom their divine rivals are friendly; or else hated and hateful to all. All the spirits, of air and water and earth and of the underground world, are jealous of their own interests, selfish in their exactions of offerings and libations, fitful and capricious in their attitudes toward those who most faithfully worship them. Among these spirits are those of man's departed ancestors. For ancestor-worship is found almost, if not quite universally combined with nature-worship in all the earlier stages of man's religious evolution. The two become more or less "amalgamated." This "amalgamation" of the two kinds of spirits, in the belief and worship of which the earlier forms of religion as known from historical sources consist, is illustrated by the case of the Semites according to the following description borrowed from a student of the subject. "The primitive Semitic community was thought by them to be made up of gods, men, and animals, all of which were akin to one another. The gods were confined each to

his own tribe or clan, and in their activities were limited to certain localities. . . . In this chthonic period they were especially associated with springs, wells, and trees, and were regarded as the proprietors of naturally watered land. The bond between them and their worshippers was thought to be one of physical kinship, and was believed to be renewed by sacrifice."

Of course, all these elements which entered into the jumbled conception of the invisible world as full of spirits, differed among different peoples in dependence on the physical character of their environment and upon the cruder or more elaborate form of their domestic, tribal, and national relations. But everywhere, the Universe was conceived of as divided against itself, and its spiritual agencies as truly divided in their attitudes toward individual men and toward each individual in dependence upon passing moods and selfish considerations. *Such* a Universe could not possibly call forth implicit trust, active affection, loyal and self-sacrificing obedience.

But even many centuries ago, a "kernel of belief" which could serve for evoking a genuinely devout and reasonable faith was forming

in certain divinely endowed and inspired minds; and this not among the Hebrews alone; or, beyond Judea, chiefly among the Chinese under the influence of Confucian ideas. Some one of the greater heavenly bodies, or some of the more impressive of the natural forces, or some one of the more distinguished of the ancestral, tribal, or national divinities, might be selected, and endowed with the higher personal and spiritual qualities, by imagination working at the task of forming an Object worthy of trust, affection, and devoted service. Numerous facts bear witness to the existence of such experiences of faith. Thus the eighty-fourth prayer of the Orphic hymns runs: "Render us always prosperous, always happy, O Fire; Thou who art eternal, beautiful, and young." In the "Book of the Dead," Osiris proclaims himself, saying: "I am the maker of the heaven and the earth. . . . It is I that have given all the gods the soul that is within them." Away back in the darkness of almost prehistoric times we may listen to whisperings of consolation, or to the cries for moral vindication, in the prayers of faith uttered by those who knew only the God whom their thought and imagination, helped by the Spirit of Him

whom they worshipped, had been able to present to the eye of faith. So in the "Maxims of Ani," we read: "Pray humbly with a loving heart all the words of which are uttered in secret. God will protect thee in thine affairs." On papyri in the British Museum is recorded the faith of pious souls, unknown to us and of the most ancient of the recorded dead, who could pray: "O my God and Lord, thou hast made me and formed me: give me an eye to see and an ear to hear thy glories." Or, again: "Hail to thee, Amon Rā, Lord of the thrones of the earth. . . . Deliverer of the timid man from the violent, judging the poor, the poor and the oppressed. Lord of wisdom, whose precepts are wise. . . . Lord of mercy, most loving, at whose coming men live." The greatest of all Egyptian monarchs, Rameses II, when in sore distress poured forth the prayer of faith: "Who, then, art thou, O my father Amon! Doth a father forget his son? Surely a wretched lot awaiteth him who opposes thy will; but blessed is he that knoweth thee, for thy deeds proceed from a heart of love." And he who, perhaps, in our Sunday-school days was represented to us as a monster of impiety, has left on record the prayer of his faith in his god, Marduk:

"According to thy mercy, O Lord, which thou bestowest upon all,
Cause me to love thy supreme rule,
Implant the fear of thy divinity within my heart,
Grant to me whatsoever may seem good before thee
Since it is thou that dost control my life."

But these instances of genuine religious faith toward the indwelling and controlling Spirit of which the Universe, as known by sensuous experience, is the revealer, with the union of trust, affection and devotion which are the essential elements of such a faith, are rare indeed, as long as the current notions of this Universe remain unchanged by the advances of science and philosophy. In a word, the knowledge of what the world really is must reveal the essential nature of the Spirit that is in it, before the development of a reasonable religious faith is possible. It is scientific observation and reflective thinking which greaten and make more worthy the Object of religious belief on its more purely intellectual side. Science does not give us a religion which is science; but it does provide us with a conception of the world which makes more reasonable and morally worthy the attitude, toward that World, of religious faith. Philosophy does not give us a speculative system of

dogmatic religion, or even a strictly demonstrable conception of the Universe as itself Universal Reason. The Absolute of speculative thinking cannot be substituted for the Object of religious faith (subjectively considered). Even less does philosophy provide a scheme of abstract thinking which will afford all the emotional and practical satisfactions of a religious faith (objectively considered). But, since its method is reflective thinking, and its sphere is the entire complex of both things and men, philosophy does help to present to the intellect a Universe of a more gloriously elevated and rationally unified type. And such a Universe is surely better fitted to elicit the confidences of a well-balanced intellect than is the world as conceived of in terms of any of the nature-religions.

We have already seen what sort of a conception of the world as a Cosmos, or orderly and beautiful system in which a vast variety of seemingly heterogeneous and contending things and conflicting forces are, as the phrase is, "made to listen to reason," has come to be the crowning belief and sleeping postulate of the modern sciences. We do not need to repeat the argument. We may appeal to the fact as

on the whole favorable to the intellectual side of the beliefs of religion. It is no longer required of the man who would assume and make practical the religious view of the physical Universe that he shall people it, everywhere and at all times, with a heterogeneous and contending crowd of invisible spiritual agencies, which he will do well either to placate or to avoid. But science has not driven the Spiritual clean out of the World of Space and Time; or quite back of the World in Time, to the position of an original Creator, but now no longer needed Presence and Power. On the contrary, science has somewhat more clearly revealed the nature of that Spirit who is the World's indwelling Mind and Will.

According to Martineau, religion is "belief in a supreme Mind and Will." While the fuller definition which Pfleiderer derives from a life-long study of its history runs: "Religion is the reference of man's life to the World-governing Power, — a reference which seeks to grow into a living union with it." Now, the last phrase of this definition adds something which is not precisely, by any means, the same thing as intellectual belief. To the more purely mental attitude of "reference," the

"growing into a living union" with the "World-governing Power" adds something of a more intimate relation of heart and will. It is this addition which converts *belief about God* into an active *faith in God.* It is, however, of the contributions of science to the reasonableness of religion as an intellectual belief of which we are now speaking.

We are well aware that there are numerous students of the physical, chemical and biological sciences, — and a few of this number, that have made notable contributions to these sciences — who are ready to contend that science has either destroyed or greatly impaired the foundations of the intellectual belief in God. But this is not the position of most of the best of such students. They are greatly tempted, as are (more basely) large numbers of the theologians and of the clergy, to relegate even the intellectual beliefs of Christianity, and *a fortiori* of all the other religions, to the domain of mere feeling; or to the judgment of the court in which the Pragmatist decides promptly the question, Is it true? by his prejudices as to the often much more difficult question, Will it work? But we may still refer to an ever-increasing number of the most

thoughtful who are ready to affirm with the late Lord Kelvin: "Overpoweringly strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie around us; and if ever perplexities — whether metaphysical or scientific — turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible power, showing to us the influence of a Free-Will through nature, and teaching us that all things depend on one Everlasting Creator and Ruler" (as quoted in the Monist, No. I, 1906, p. 31).

The whole history of philosophy, as a record of the attempts which the human mind has made to comprehend the World by the method of reflective thinking, and the progress which has crowned these efforts in the persons and doctrines of the foremost philosophers and of their immediate or remoter followers, shows us that philosophy and the intellectual side of the beliefs of religion, have quite uniformly advanced in relations of dependence each upon the other, or of common consent to the same great truths. The greater problems of religion and those of philosophy are the same. From both points of view, the religious and the philosophical, the answers given to these problems profoundly influence religion as a life.

Whence do I come? or, Who is the author of my being? What are the essential relations in which I must stand, and what are those other relations in which I ought to stand, toward this source of my being, as well as toward my fellow men? What is to be my destiny, and what is it necessary for me to do and to be, in order best to realize this destiny? — such are some of the questions which, whether we call them questions of religious belief or questions of philosophy, are essentially the same and must be answered in essentially the same way. This position is not particularly affected by the appeal to revelation or inspiration as, telling *against* reason, on the side of faith: for the same reason is the organ of revelation, the inspired of inspiration; and the faith which it produces and which reposes in it seeks ever to become a more reasonable faith.

"Reason" says Kant, toward the close of his "Transcendental Dialectic," where his scepticism culminates in the attempt to remove knowledge in order to make room for faith; — "Reason, constantly strengthened by the powerful arguments that come to hand by themselves, though they are no doubt empirical only, cannot be discouraged by any doubts of subtle

and abstract speculation. Roused from every inquisitive indecision, as from a dream, by one glance at the wonders of nature and the majesty of the Cosmos, reason soars from height to height, until it reaches the highest, from the conditioned to conditions, till it reaches the supreme and unconditioned Author of all." But according to Kant, at the "highest," what reason actually finds and grasps is only an "Idea," — transcendental indeed and having the force and authority of a principle to regulate the intellect, but affording no trustworthy knowledge of the Reality which is assumed to correspond to this idea. As has been pointed out in a previous volume of this series ("Knowledge and Reality," Chapter IX of "What Can I Know?"), this sceptical attitude toward the central conception of religion is equally effective for the destruction of all the claims of all the positive sciences to give us any knowledge of the real World, with the phenomena of which they imagine that they are busying themselves. Indeed, carried to its legitimate limit, such scepticism makes all knowledge and all communication of knowledge impossible and absurd. We must recognize, then, the position and the indispensable value of intellectual belief in the

attempt of religion to construct for faith a reasonable conception of the invisible, spiritual Presence that is revealed in the world of sense, in essentially the same way in which we found ourselves compelled to recognize a similar intellectual belief as the crowning achievement and productive postulate of the positive sciences.

It is not true, then, that the faiths of religion come by the way of "a faculty of acquiring knowledge which has no rapport with our normal faculties of that kind." Getting faith does indeed involve gifts of intuition; but they are not a species of magical clairvoyance like that which the Zulu medicine men employ in what they call "opening the gates of distance." On the contrary, there is a most notable resemblance between the *scientific belief* in a Universe of rational order, with a wonderful but mysterious majesty, having the beauty of sublimity, and the conception of a World created and controlled by immanent and omnipresent Spirit, as imagination and reflective thinking have prepared this conception to be the Object of *religious belief*.

When, along the line of the development of the nature-religions, under the guidance of a

growing knowledge of the physical world, and by the pressure of the needs of the human soul, the personification and deification of the Sun, and his exaltation to the place of Supreme Lord of the earth and Father of the faithful, take place, even this does not prove satisfying to the mind that craves a well-founded conception of the Object of religious belief. The genuine religious faith of the devout soul in *his* God, Osiris, Amon, Marduk, or Yahveh, requires something more. According to a story which has the marks of authenticity, one of the Incas could say: "I tell you there must be a greater and more mighty Lord above our father, the Sun, who orders him to take the course he follows day by day."

But, as we have already seen, the scientific belief which dominates the conception of the World current at the present time, is not born wholly of intellectual parentage. Æsthetical and at least *quasi*-ethical considerations have something to say in its formation and in its support, when it is called in question by scepticism or by a quite rigid criticism. For the "scientist" is also a man, is primarily a man; and being a man, he is an artist and recognizes, however faintly or unconsciously, the presence

and the worth, in the world of things, of certain resemblances to his æsthetical and moral ideals.

The very nature of religious faith, however, is to lean much more heavily than does either science or philosophy, upon the emotional stirrings and practical needs of the human spirit. And it is these emotions and needs in which the imperative calls for religious faith more patently consist. No other of the several complex relations which every individual sustains in some degree toward the world of things and of men, so completely and so intensely involves the entire soul as do the relations belonging to the religious life.

"A preliminary analysis of man's religious consciousness can only prepare the way and classify the material, for a subsequent detailed consideration of the different active factors which enter into his total religious experience. But even a preliminary analysis must be guided by one assumption which the detailed consideration will amply confirm. This assumption may be stated in the following terms: Religion has its psychological sources in every important form of the functioning of the human soul. *It is man in his entirety, who is the*

maker of religion. Every factor of his complex being enters into his religious life and religious development. The unconscious or — to use a much abused term of modern psychology — the 'subliminal' influences are present and potent factors. The lower impulses and emotional stirrings solicit or impel him to be religious. His social instincts or more intelligent social desires and aims co-operate in the same result. The uplift to that condition of rational faith which corresponds to the ideal adjustment of the human Self to the Divine Self is effected largely through the awakening and employment of the higher, or æsthetical and ethical sentiments. Human intelligence — beginning with that instinctive intellectual curiosity which leads man to try to explain things to himself, and himself to his own Self, in naïve and childlike fashion, and ending with the most lofty speculative flights of the trained reflective reason — is committed to the cause of religious development. Without his metaphysical nature, his ontological consciousness, man would neither be scientific nor religious; much less would science and religion find subjects for controversy or for friendly discussion. And the voluntary and practical adjustments

of himself to that Other and Absolute Self, in whose Being he comes to believe his own being to be somehow comprehended, is the 'heart of the heart' of man's religious life. That the finite will should be brought into harmony with the Infinite Will, and man's activities rightly attuned to the active Being of the World in which he lives, is even more definitely the aim of religion than it is the aim of science; and this appears true whenever both religion and science come to understand their truest and highest mission.

"Feeling, and every form of feeling; intellect, and every aspect and phase of intellect; will, and every species of the voluntary and deliberately chosen course of conduct; — all these enter, as integral and reciprocally related 'moments,' into the religious experience. For religion *in man* is nothing less than *man himself* considered in his total being with respect to its manifold relations toward one of the most complex and comprehensive ends of all life and all development.

"This unqualified manner of asserting the comprehensive character of the religious factors in the psychical being of man, receives confirmation from all the attempts which have

been made to reduce these factors to one, two, or three selected forms of mental reactions. Such attempts have inevitably resulted in failure, so far as their positive contentions are concerned. But they have, when taken together, shown what a rich endowment in the religious domain belongs to the soul of man. For the attempts not only correct the exclusiveness of one another; they also supplement one another in such a way as to show that each one of them has truth, but by no means all the truth, on its side." ("Philosophy of Religion," Vol. I, pp. 262 ff.).

If now we turn to the impulses and emotional sources of the faith in an ever-living God, we realize the truth of the declaration of Novalis that the "heart is the organ of religion," — meaning by this, religion as that attitude of perfect trust, love and obedience, which *is* religion, in its complete and supreme subjective expression. The impulse toward this attitude may be detected in that sense of unrest, of dissatisfaction with the present world, with present mental and moral attainments, and with the prevalent social conditions, which forms the source of all human progress and all human effort. "All religion," said Humboldt, "rests

on a need of the soul; we hope, we dread, because we wish."

But to say that "fear first made the gods," and fear alone, is to contradict the plainest facts of man's religious development. Especially in ancestor-worship is there a longing for the continuance in the spirit-world of those relations of confidence and affection which have characterized the most agreeable, satisfactory, and practically helpful of human relations in the world of sense. The heart of man would gladly transfer these relations into the invisible world; and not only with his deified ancestors, but with as many as possible of the more benignant and companionable of the other heavenly powers. Why should he not, then, invite them to his times of friendly feasting, that they may, though unseen by the eye of sense, by their spiritual presence grace the board? And when he has attained to the higher and more reasonable forms of religious faith, and feels strong within him the desire for communion with the Alone God, he prays to Him as his Heavenly Father for the gift of "Daily bread," and gives thanks for that and every other good thing as received by faith from the benevolent divine hand.

Feelings of admiration, of wonder, and of reverent awe, also impel the mind and heart to faith in God. There is no other sure refuge for the individual against the ills that are always threatening to proceed from the Nature that he cannot control, and from his fellow men of evil mind, except that which is to be found in making his God his invulnerable fortress and rock of defence.

But the higher emotions and practical needs of the human spirit as rational and free are the springs from which flow inexhaustibly forth the loving faith in a faithful Heavenly Father and God of love. "The non-satisfaction with the world," said Pascal, "is the last bond which binds the (otherwise) non-pious man to God." It is the last, in the sense of being the profoundest and most powerful of the ties which unite mankind — the individual and the race — to that perfect Moral Spirit, communion with whom, in the confidences of faith, can alone satisfy the spirit of man. This fact is to be explained only on the admission that man *is* himself a spirit and so capable of developing a spiritual life. He is then following the path of personal perfection after the pattern of the "divine image" in

which he is being made, if he is following the path of faith.

It was Judaism alone among the religions of the ancient world, that, by the mouth of its prophets, proclaimed such a conception of God as to make reasonable for the enlightened mind the attitude toward Him of an ethical and spiritual love. To identify the feelings of affection toward the "Heavenly Father," by whatever other name called, as they have occasionally been exhibited by those holding the beliefs of all of the greater religions of the world, with the sexual emotion of love, is seriously to misinterpret the facts of history. Neither can it be credibly said that this emotion supplies the explanatory source of the religious feeling called by the same name. The "natural" source of the love of man for his god is rather to be found in the broader and less sensuous relations of kinship and friendship. It was from Judaism that Christianity inherited the conception of a God who, being himself "Holy," demanded of all those who would enter into the covenant of faith with Him, the being themselves also holy as perpetually purified by the faith that worked upon the life through the power of an ethical and spiritual love.

The spiritually improved conception of the "Being of the World," which fits it to be the object of trust, of ethical love, and loving obedience, is not, indeed, confined to Judaism and to Christianity as its successor in this line of religious development. Something of it — and in not a few individual instances, something large and grand and morally purifying — is to be found in the higher developments of the nature-religions and in ancestor-worship. It is to be found among the Chinese in the Confucian conception of Heaven, and in the personal attitude toward Heaven as Lord of the life of the individual and of the nation, (Shang Tî, or T'ien) in certain devotees of Confucianism. Its existence among the worshippers of the Sun-god, as Supreme Lord and Father to the soul which by faith becomes his son, has already been noted in ancient Egypt and Babylonia. To a still greater extent, perhaps, has it emerged in the various conceptions of Buddha as the Merciful (Amida-Buddha), the Lord of Life and Saviour of men. But it is in Christianity as the religion of Jesus, and in Christian Theism, that we find, far more than in any of the other of the world's religions, the conception of nature as an orderly

system of forces and laws, expanding in such a way as to furnish the more adequate personal satisfactions with regard to the inner spiritual content of nature when the spirit of man assumes toward it the attitude of faith. "Doubtless," says the greatest of the Hebrew prophets, — "Doubtless thou art our Father, O Yahveh; thou art our Father, our Redeemer." The attitude of Christian faith reposes in the confidence that it is so.

More even than in the case of the complex and half-mysterious faiths of morality, is it true of the faiths of religion, that the evidence which establishes their claims and puts the will of the individual under obligation to them, is the experience of the faiths themselves. Studied in a comprehensive, historical way, the evolution of this experience is the problem of the philosophy of religion. The main facts are unmistakable. There has been an evolution of religion, regarded both as doctrine to which intellectual belief is invited to attach itself, and also as an experience of the moral and spiritual, as well as social benefits, of religious faith. Described in somewhat uncouth and over-abstract way, we may use the phrase "God-consciousness" for this experi-

ence. The complex religious thoughts, feelings and doings of the race, and especially of its leaders and teachers, have resulted in a continuous process of the evolution of this so-called "God-consciousness." With his customary grand style Rothe, in his *Christliche Ethik* (II, p. 257 f.) maintains that the religious consciousness as involving the generic likeness of man to God (the so-called "God-consciousness") affords a picture of the world by faith, which is a fragmentary and partial, but really valid representation of the World as known to God. By faith man has a divinely imparted apprehension of the World in its relation to God, — as God's world, that is; and so, as the World appears to God himself.

We need not claim strict scientific accuracy, much less demonstrative certainty, for this picture of the world as it appears to the eye of religious faith. We cannot do this for any form of either moral or religious belief. We cannot do this for the modern theistic or conventional Christian belief in a wholly righteous and graciously redeeming God. To do this would be the destruction of the attitude of faith. But this attitude is itself, and in its essential nature, an affirmation of the existence

of God as the object of the soul's trust, affection, and devoted service. It includes belief in God as Author, Preserver, and Redeemer, of the personal life of the individual who has and makes practical use of the faith.

Suppose, however, that one who is exhorted to have for himself and by an act of will, this faith in a living God, pleads, as well he may, the difficulty of choosing amidst the endless variety of the conceptions which attempt to picture more precisely the Object required by faith, and the obscurity which hangs over the face of the picture as it is drawn by any particular religion; and yet more if we try to construct a "composite photograph" from them all. Is it not, indeed, an unanswerable objection to every attempt at a reasonable religious faith, that every man makes for himself a picture of the Divine Being out of material most accessible or most agreeable to him; and that these works of human imagination are all alike tainted by the inevitable mistakes and vices of an unavoidable "anthropomorphism"? In a word, man inevitably makes his god in his own (that is, in man's) image. All gods — those of the greater religions, of Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and even of Christianity, as well as

of the lowest nature-religions and of ancestor-worship — are, therefore, "man-made gods." Was not this the sneer of the most ancient Greek atheism, and as well, the ground of the biting sarcasm of Matthew Arnold's attack on the conception of the Christian God, as held by certain English Bishops and theologians of his own day?

Now let us at once make the confession which there is no argument for escaping, and no promise of practical good in delaying. Of course, man makes his own gods and his own Alone God; and he makes this, as every other object of imagination and thought, according to his own human capacity for such work of construction. Man has no other way of perceiving, or imagining or conceiving anything, than his own "man-like" way. He cannot believe in anything, or have faith in anything, which is not constructed in essentially an anthropomorphic way. But then, this word "anthropomorphism" is not the terrible and all-destroying monster which it is assumed to be. In reality, when used in the correct way, it is either a very mild and harmless ghostly existence; or it is a friendly guest which must always be entertained and well treated at

every table, whether spread with the bounties of science, art, morality, or religion. For all human science is man-made, and dependent upon the ability of human reason, when properly employed, to reach the truth of Reality. All knowledges and all beliefs are alike anthropomorphic; although they are by no means alike credible or advanced to the same degree of assurance and accuracy.

From the point of view of the psychology and theory of knowledge and of belief, this plea for a universal scepticism has already been sufficiently discussed. Its refutation consists in the ever-increasing and constantly more and more confirmed confidence of human reason in itself. Religion, though more frequently assailed by this kind of agnosticism, is not especially weak under its assaults. Quite the contrary is true. Religion has a more lively and picturesque way of stating the same saving conviction. It asserts that "God made man in the divine image"; or rather, to give a more modern and scientific turn to the same truth: God is perpetually making man more and more into his own divine image; and he is doing this by that process of revelation and its accompaniment of inspiration, to which

responds the attitude of faith. Hence the increasing confidence in the reasonableness of this faith.

It would seem, then, that every individual who raises for himself the question, "What should *I* believe?" if he looks fairly in the face the phenomena of man's religious life and the religious development of the race, must at some time hold with himself a conversation somewhat like the following. "If you are a man, you are already a religious being. You cannot help this. The resolve to be irreligious, in the full negative meaning of the word, — to be *non*-religious, — will have no effect by way of disposing of this fundamental fact. You may, in some sort, 'undo' yourself both morally and religiously, as well as intellectually; but this will not be by the way of voiding or negating all the elements, aptitudes, tendencies, — the entire mental and emotional equipment, which constitutes your religious nature. A wrecked ship is still a ship in process of being wrecked, until every spar is torn out, all canvas blown away, all timbers wrenched apart. Just as a ship, from the time its keel is laid until it is launched and fitted out for the longest voyage, is still a ship in the building.

Even the ribs, bare and bleached on the sand-dunes or on the rocks, have still the ship-like shape. They are still the skeleton of a ship that is a wreck. The human soul, whether saved or lost, remains more true to its personal type than is any construction of human hands."

But a God universal, even if not relegated to distant times and spaces but conceived of as immanent in the physical Universe and in human history, does not fully satisfy the cravings of the awakened spirit of the individual man. He wills to say, not simply, "Thou art the Heavenly Father, the Creator and Ruler of the World, the Spirit that makes for righteousness in human history"; but also, "Thou art *my* God, *my* Father, and *my* Redeemer." And now, as we have been led to emphasize the universal reasonableness of the central faith of religion, as growing out of the very nature of things and the nature and development of personal life, so we may feel warranted in emphasizing the individuality of religion, and of the faith of the individual in his personal relations to God.

That different individuals should emphasize, and accordingly prize and cultivate in a special way, different elements or aspects of religious

faith (or of subjective religion) is not strange; it is no disparagement to the individual, much less to the nature of religion. According to these peculiarities the conceptions will vary which different individuals will attain of the Object of their faith. For the working principle here will be the same as in all matters, whether of knowledge or of belief.

"It is a commonplace saying that religion is not a science, or a theory, or a system of dogmas, or an affair of ceremonies and cult; it is a life, an interior experience. But left in this way, the saying is not particularly distinctive or illumining as to the real nature of religion. For in the broadest and yet most appropriate meaning of the words, science, theory, dogma, and cult, are all items of *experience.* Nothing that is not somehow experienced can exist for man, — not even as a flight of imagination, a plunge of intellect, a soaring of sentiment, or a despair of agnostic unbelief. And to speak of an 'inner' experience is, of course, tautological. The most occult sciences, the most abstruse theories, the most complicated systems of abstract dogmas, and the feelings and observances of the most mysterious cult, can only become real as they are experi-

ences of the inner life, the soul of man. And each real experience of whatever kind, and whether communicable and acceptable to the common consciousness, or not, belongs to some particular Self. *It is only in the reality of the living experience of the individual Self that the Universal and Absolute becomes known and believed in or dimly apprehended as felt.*

"Yet this saying, which makes religion peculiarly subjective and individual, means well and has an important truth to convey. These intuitions of truth and reality, together with their connections, which we feel powerless to produce by any form of demonstration within other minds; these aspirations, hopes, fears, and sentimental attractions and repulsions, in which others do not seem always to share; these moral, artistic, and other ideals, together with the stirrings of soul which they produce in us without seeming in the same way to affect our fellows; — these, and such as these, are the experiences which we consider our very own. The individual life consists in them rather than in the knowledge of matters of common-sense perception, or of accepted scientific formulas. Neither do the opinions and social habits which are received from others

as a part of the common life of the family, the tribe, the nation, the race, when regarded as common, seem to be peculiarly the possession of the individual. Such common beliefs, sentiments, and influential practices characterize the religious life and religious development of every human being, — as has already been abundantly shown. And it is these, we repeat, which must chiefly form the data for a reflective study of religion. But after all, religion as an actual experience of the individual is always something more than what is common to others. It is a very special and deeply interior experience, in its higher forms of realization; and even in its lower forms, it is something which, from its very nature, each personal being feels to be of peculiar value to, not only the family, the tribe, the nation, or the race, but to his *own Self*. Doubtless, then, there is something about this experience which entitles every man to speak of *my* religion in a different way from that in which he feels justified in speaking of my science, or my politics, or even of my morality. Doubtless, also, the individual who seeks a satisfactory religious belief and cult, a religion that shall 'find' him, is not satisfied with what he finds until it

becomes a satisfaction especially adjusted to his particular experience.

"What we venture to call the peculiar 'individuality' of religion is, therefore, a characteristic which belongs to the very nature of all religious experience. In having this experience, indeed, the individual cannot separate himself from the life of the race. The social and racial influences will fuse with his peculiar experiences of every form, whether he wishes it or not, and whether he is conscious of these influences, or not. Yet every one is quite justified in seeking to have his own religious needs satisfactorily met. And the thesis to which attention is now called maintains that religion ought to be, and in its highest forms of development actually is, able to meet the peculiar needs of the individual. For what, indeed, we mean by the 'individuality of religion' is just this: — the adaptability of the common and essential elements of the religious experience to all the differences which characterize, not only the different races, and temperaments, the different epochs of history and changes of political and social environment, and the two sexes, but also the infinite differences in constitution and culture which

mark the individuals among mankind." ("Philosophy of Religion," I, pp. 594 ff.)

Every awakened human soul who enters upon the life of faith in God must have something answering to this experience:

> "Mind seeks to see,
> Touch, understand, by mind inside of me,
> The Outside Mind — whose quickening I attain
> To recognize."

But no "recognition" can be attained as long as this Other remains an "Outside Mind." The avenue of entrance is the experience of faith. And at the last, if successful after being long baffled, the searcher will have to say:

> "I searched for God with heart-throbs of despair,
> 'Neath ocean's bed, above the vaulted sky;
> At last I searched myself, my inmost I,
> And found him there."

"The thoughts of the heart, these are the wealth of a man," said the Chinese sage. "As a man thinketh within himself, so is he," declared the wise man of Israel. But Jesus told the deeper truth when he taught in life as well as speech: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This individuality of the priceless experience of religious faith, and the infinite adaptability of the Object of this faith to all stages in the intellectual and

moral culture of the individual and of the race, cannot be disputed; and fortunately it cannot be diminished, by any reference to the creeds, or the sacred scriptures, or the philosophy or the cult, of any set form of religion.

If, now, we say that, in order to have the only mental picture of its Object which can call forth and sustain a satisfying and saving faith, one must frame an elaborate conception of God precisely corresponding to that of other believers in biblical religion or in the creed of some religious communion, whether so-called Christian, or not, one does not alter the facts. God was differently conceived of by all the different biblical writers; and there are indisputable proofs of a great change in some very important factors, if we trace the development of this conception from the earliest to the latest of these writers. Jesus' Father in Heaven is far from being the precise facsimile of the Yahveh of the earliest Old-Testament scriptures. And how differently is the God to whom Jesus looked as Father, and whose son Jesus was in a very special and unique way, conceived of by the different Christian sects and creeds and teachers of historical Christianity! It is not in the power of human

thoughts and human words to fix any comprehensive idea, much less any supreme moral or religious ideal, in this rigid way. And, indeed, who would wish it done to the destruction of these supreme values of spontaneity and efficiency which belong of right to the very nature of religious faith? Is the One who is the Creator and Inspirer of all souls, and the Redeemer of all who come to Him in faith, to be strictly confined in the forms of his revelation to those whom he has himself endowed with the infinite variety in unity, the *individuality*, that is the characteristic of all finite personal life?

To this thought we may add in justification of the divine procedure that it is this same individuality of the experience of faith which constitutes the wealth of the community of the faithful. Some men, in the religious aspect of life and practice of duty, are predominatingly intellectual, others practical, others emotional. The world has need of thinkers on religious topics, of theologians, of practical reformers, of religious poets, and of monks and nuns. But it has special need of a great host of plain men and women, who take God into their hearts and lives by the experience

of faith, to meet the endless variety of their own daily physical and spiritual needs.

But shall one answer for himself the question, What should I believe? in matters of religious concern, with a haughty disregard of authority, and with the pride of self-confidence, or the whimsical rejection of argument and advice from other minds? Is this the way in which any scientific or social belief, worthy of being entrusted with the conduct of life, is to be attained? To ask such a question is to answer it. In such a spirit as this no one ever came into the comforting and helpful experience of a reasonable religious faith.

Referring back to the nature of the intellectual belief in God, we are reminded of the practical maxim that the seeker must be reasonable in his search. This reasonableness includes that he shall not demand a kind of evidence unsuitable to the subject and therefore impossible to provide. It also includes that he shall fairly estimate the evidence to which his attention is called; or to the facing of which he can find his way by the path of reflection. But the call of religion does not tolerate delay or indifference. Yet to secure even this intellectual belief it may often be one's duty to

"wait patiently on God." In truth, one's whole life may be virtually a development of faith in God. As Augustine declared, in description of a life of disbelief succeeded by the birth and then the never ceasing vitality of a growing faith: "I will pass then beyond this power of my nature also, rising by degrees unto Him who made me. . . . Yea, I will pass beyond it, that I may approach unto Thee, O sweet Light."

We are not engaged in preparing a new form of creed; even much less, a detailed statement of all our private opinions and conjectures or settled convictions respecting the truths and the life of religion. Could we accomplish the former task, however bravely undertaken, and completed with no matter how much self-satisfaction, the result would almost certainly be only to create further divergence of the claims that already divide Christian believers. Worse still: it might discourage some soul who would gladly, if only it could, select for acceptance some one of the many existing creeds. If, however, we were to accomplish the latter task, with a really splendid and pride-worthy detail, there is probably not an individual in the whole world who could be found quite com-

pletely to agree with the result. It is not thus that we would exhort another to have faith in God. We will explain our purpose, the rather, by quoting the words of Scleiermacher when he was urging upon every man the duty of having a religious faith. "You perceive that I am not speaking here of the endeavor to make others similar to ourselves; nor of the conviction that what is exhibited in one is essential to all; it is merely my aim to ascertain the true relation between our individual life and the common nature of man, and clearly to set it forth." And again: "Religious views, pious emotions, and serious considerations with regard to them, — these we cannot throw out to one another in such small crumbs as the topics of a light conversation; and when the discourse turns upon sacred subjects, it would rather be a crime than a virtue to have an answer ready for every question, and a rejoinder for every remark."

When, however, the question, What should I believe? reaches the depths and rises to the heights of the personal and social interests involved in the faiths and the life of religion, we can have no reasonable doubt as to what our answer should be.

Nothing can be of so great importance for the interests of the personal life as to have it properly adjusted to the Universe, from which it springs, which constitutes its environment, and which determines its destiny. According to the essential nature of the human mind, this Universe, known as a world of allied phenomena by the senses and by inferences from the senses, is interpreted into, and explained by, the forces of an invisible world of personal and spiritual import and character. The belief in the reality of this spiritual world is justifiable, whether we approach the problem from the scientific or from the religious point of view. The necessities of the reason which must be satisfied are essentially the same, in their intellectual aspect, from either point of view. Under the pressure of these necessities, science talks about different degrees and kinds of energies and a fine outfit of mechanism and laws; religion talks about spirits that have minds, and emotions, and wills of their own. In the lower stages of the development of both science and religion, the vast variety of things and of their sensible changes, and the capricious doings of man and other living beings, do not seem to warrant the belief in a real *Universe*, a "Cos-

mos," that has rational unity, beauty, and an interest in the development of the higher moral and spiritual life of man. But surely, though slowly and with not a few gaps and seeming inconsistencies, the picture of *such* a Universe establishes and justifies itself before the reason of the race. Science looks on this process as a natural evolution; religion, with its deeper and more spiritual insight, trusts it as the Self-revelation of the Divine Being of the world, the indwelling perfect Ethical Spirit of God.

Thus far goes that theory of the Universe, that hypothesis explanatory of the World's behavior, which commends itself as the most reasonable and important of all intellectual beliefs. But this belief, as *bare* belief (if, indeed, it could remain "bare belief"), does not satisfy the human soul. Man desires to come into communion with this mysterious Presence, to know and to do what this supreme Wisdom decrees best for him, to follow the courses of conduct which are prescribed by this Holy Spirit; and, when the consciousness of moral impurity, moral weakness, and moral obliquity, is awakened, the quickened soul desires the Divine forgiveness, and a participation in the

fulness of the Divine redeeming love. All this is not modern, is not peculiar to any form of religious belief or religious cult. All this, and much more of the same sort, belongs to the very nature and the universally prevalent essentials of the realization of the values of the personal life, and the conditions of personal development.

But this good, so eagerly sought by the awakened spiritual life of man, as experienced in the individual or evinced in the religious history of the race, can come in only one way. It can come only through the experience of faith. And religious faith demands the whole man. It is, indeed, dependent upon some measure of intellectual belief; but it is itself essentially an attitude of trust, affection, and the submission of will, to the Object of belief. The Object of the faith of religion is God.

It would seem, then, that to have no interest in this question, What should I believe? is unworthy of any one capable of appreciating the supreme values of the personal life. To be indifferent to one's own destiny, or to that of the race, as considered and counselled from the religious point of view, is not to rise into the region of calm and god-like repose; it

is, the rather, to sink toward the lower region of an animal satisfaction in the things of easier comprehension and lower value; or of unwillingness to excite the mind in the quest of truths which have the highest theoretical interest and practical importance.

From this view we argue not only the advantage but also the duty of securing and cherishing the faiths of religion. This duty involves the obligation to prolonged effort to determine the content of faith. It involves the duty of a diligent search for God, that one may by faith make him indeed one's very own, "*my God.*" It involves the duty of zealously cultivating this "kernel" of faith when once it has been found. "A germ in darkness; let it grow." It is the call of duty, if by any means found possible, not simply to believe in a Force, or an Unconditioned impersonal Principle, that will help explain Nature as a mechanism under a process of physical evolution; but, the rather, to believe in a God that affords to reason some adequate ground for the moral and religious nature of man, and for the ethical and religious evolution of the race. But above all, if possible (and only by an act of the will to have faith is this possible) is it the

duty of the individual person, to have faith in a God, with whom he may come into intimate communion of spirit, and in whom he may find a loving Father and an efficient Redeemer.

We have thus far spoken of only one of the faiths of religion, of which — if we are to judge by the immense variety and the diversity of creeds and cults, the endless verbal controversies and the violent and bloody strifes — there is an indefinite number of hopelessly confused and confusing examples. But this one article of faith is *the* faith of religion; and by its character and powerful influence it determines the character and regulates and appraises the value of all that religion is and means to man. What one really and intelligently believes about God determines all one's religious beliefs; the character of one's faith in God fixes the character of all one's religious life.

It is the God of Christian Theism who, of all the forms of religious belief, considered from the intellectual point of view, most satisfactorily answers to the demands of reason for an explanation of the phenomena of the physical world and of human history. But especially is it by the experience of trust, love, and the life of obedience to such a God, that the emo-

tional, moral, and æsthetical demands of the soul are best met, and the practical needs of personal development are most satisfied.

This faith in God removes the harsh contrast, often amounting to a conflict, between the natural and the so-called supernatural. It accomplishes this without banishing God from the world of time and sense, or from any part of it; and also without substituting for a living God an abstraction or a mechanical system of impersonal agencies and things. To this faith, God is ever manifested as immanent in the World, but as never to be identified, to the destruction of his personality, with the sum-total of its existences and phenomena.

This faith also affords, not simply as a speculative system but as a vital experience, the ground for interpreting aright the theological doctrines of God as Creator and Preserver; but, especially, as ever-present and ever-operative Providence and Ruler of the Universe which he holds — as faith figuratively expresses it — "in the hollow of his hand." In this way, also, the same faith makes revelation and inspiration so *natural* (in the higher and more inclusive meaning of the word, which renders it equivalent to whatever accords with reason

and with moral order), as to bring the Divine energies of enlightenment and redemption into the closest contact with every human soul, and to put them at its disposal. This is the supreme triumph of religious faith, to find in God one's Redeemer.

Here, then, we come again upon the two conceptions which we have found dominating our thought in all discussion of the problems of Knowledge, Duty, and Faith, from the practical points of view. These are Personality and Development. Our answer to the question, What should we *all* believe? so far as a religious faith is concerned, will be determined by the spiritual unity of the race, as it develops under divinely controlled physical and social conditions. But, in matters of faith, as in matters of duty, there will be to the end individuality rather than strict conformity. Every soul will therefore have to determine for itself, What should *I* believe? The individuality is not eccentricity, or the caprice of superstition, or the practice of religious fanaticism. It signifies the gracious adaptability of the Infinite to all the endless variety of finite needs. But the faith that will triumph must be, both for the individual and for the race, a positive, mightily

efficient, and morally purifying and uplifting faith.

The call of the world of men today, which is most insistent and most intense, if not most loud and clamorous, is the call for a rehabilitation of religious faith. The answer to this call must recognize the fact, that man is, from first to last and in all his aspects and activities, a religious being. This experience which we call religion is, in simple verity, is, as fact of psychology and fact of history, of all facts that concern human nature, most important and most powerful. Man is "a speaking being." He is a "rational being," — meaning by this that he restlessly seeks explanation for himself and his Universe. He is "a social being"; and he therefore is resistlessly compelled to find his satisfactions and means for self-development in intercourse with others of his own kind. But, as including all these, and something much more, he is a spirit, called to the perfection of personal life. The way to answer that call is the way of religion; it is the way, the gate to which is religious faith. And on this matter, the voice of emotion in prayer and poetry accords faithfully with the voice of practical philosophy.

"All things living are indebted to Thy goodness, . . . It is Thou alone, O Lord, who art the true Parent of all things." — PRAYER TO SHANG TÎ.

"Among themselves all things
Have order; and from hence the form, which makes
The Universe resemble God." — DANTE.

"Is not God i' the world His power first made?
Is not His love at issue still with sin,
Visibly when a wrong is done on earth?" — BROWNING.

"The High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." — ISAIAH.

"There is only one thing needful: to know God." — AMIEL.

In his practical answer to the inquiry, "What should I believe?" the wise man will, then, make the faiths of morality and religion his chief concern. But among them all, there is one which virtually includes all. This is the Faith in God. But the value of this faith depends upon two things: What kind of a God is this in whom faith is to be placed? And what is the place which this faith is to have in the conduct and the development of the personal life? To answer, by the actual shaping of this life, these two questions in a fully satisfying way, is the problem of problems, for the individual and for the race.

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